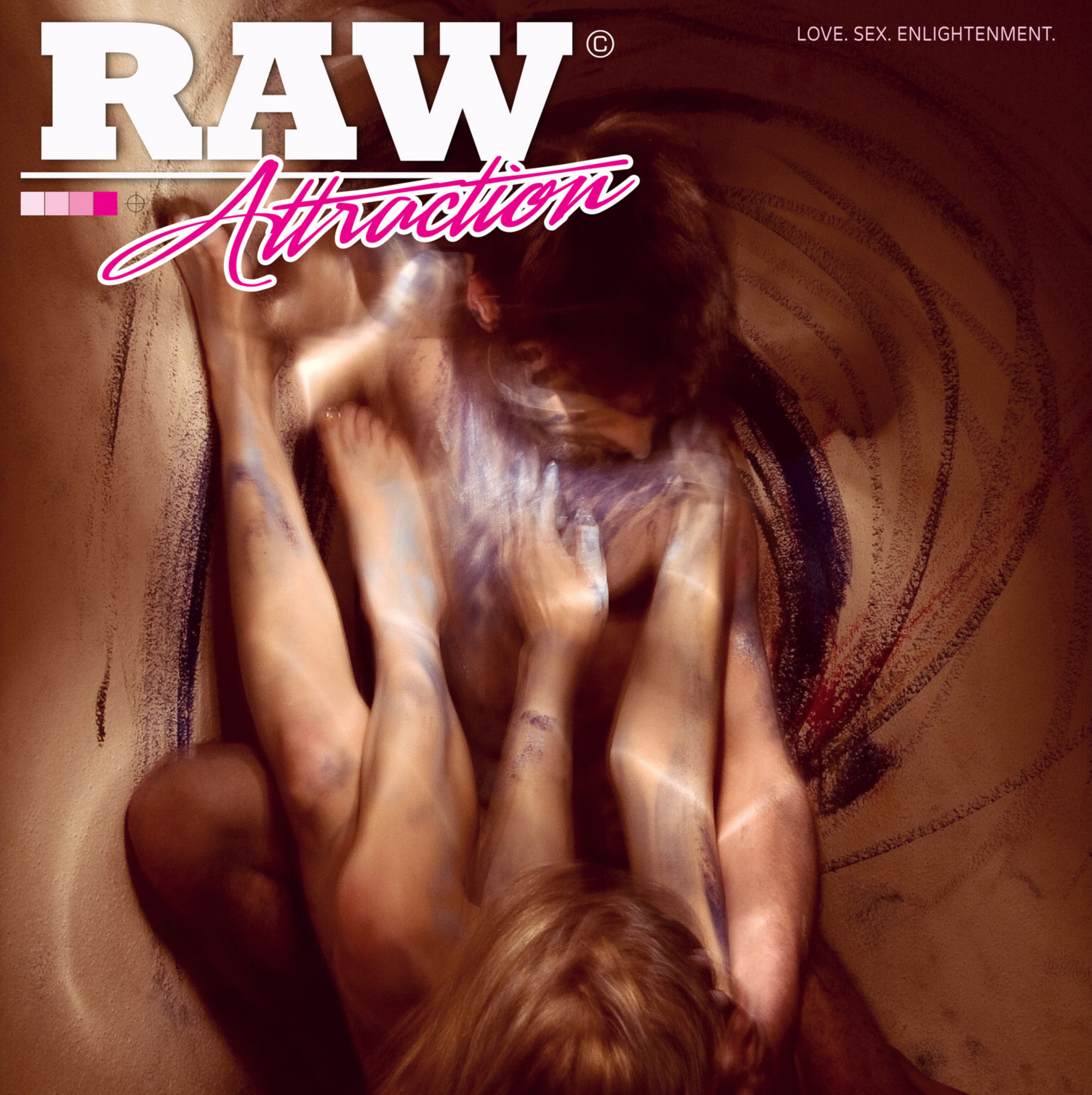
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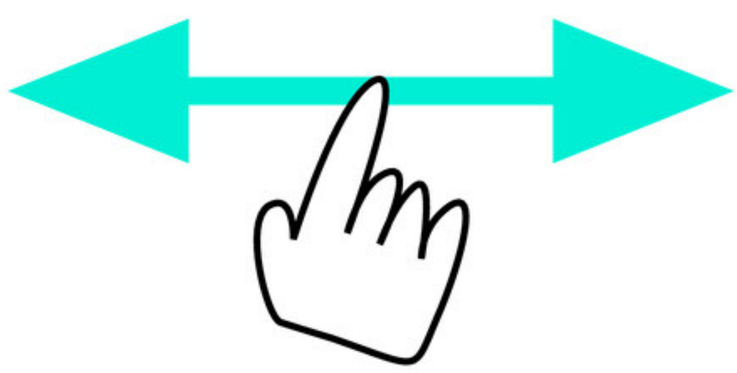
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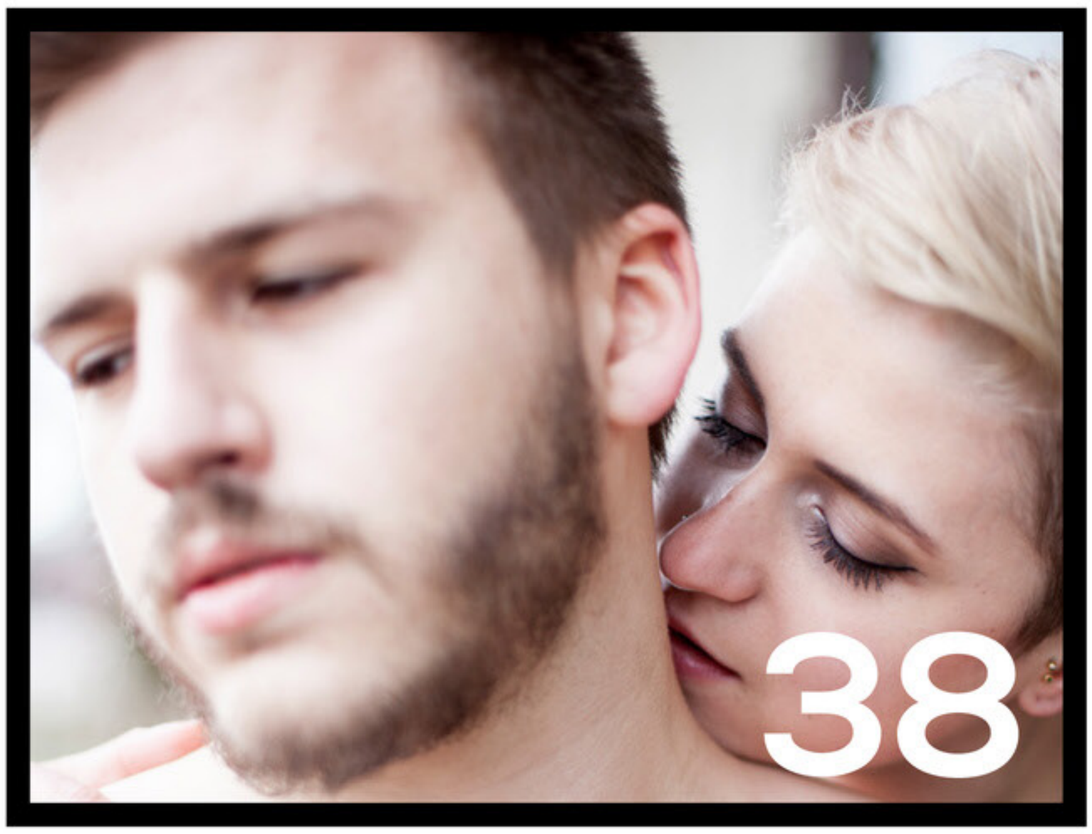
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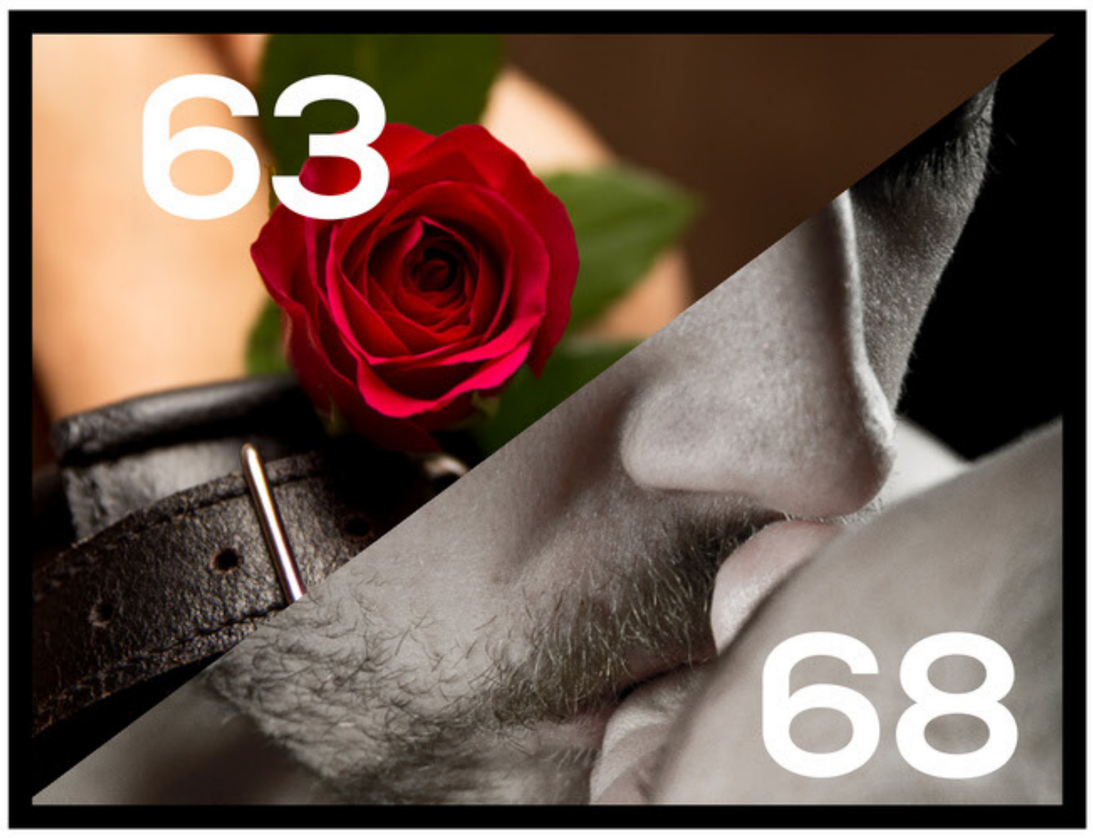
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Dear people of the world,

I write to you this month in the depths of compassion for all of you courageous folks who are stepping into the alchemical fire of love.

These last weeks I have thrown myself into the pit of transformation and it is only now that I am crawling out the other side, albeit smeared in more joy, love and awareness.

I would be lying if I said it was easy. At times, facing my shadows has been pure and utter hell. But I have learned that darkness can be the greatest gift and there is great reason to befriend that which hides behind the light.

This month's magazine has a very cleansing feel to it. It really is time this month to throw out all that doesn't serve us and to step into greater and greater love. This works on every level, whether you are looking for a relationship, are new to a relationship or many years into a relationship. It all starts within.



Steve Burford
Editor: Raw Attraction Magazine

This month I have one coaching spot open up, I am only working with a select few individuals at the moment. Shoot me a message on **steve@rawattractionmagazine.com** if you would like a free transformational session so that we can get to know each other!

Con amor, siempre.

Steve

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SELF LOVE

RAW

GETTING OVER AN EX

by Nadine Lee

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My man Echkart Tolle said, in his mighty fine book “The Power of Now”, that healing any loss, heart ache, separation pain caused by break ups or loss – can be done within a matter of a few days – if we are truly completely 100% present with how we are feeling, embrace these feelings, and feel them within every single cell of our body. Once we have done this we can easily heal and let go of them.

Sounds easier said than done, right? Too good to be true? No, it can be done!

So many of us inflict the pain of a past relationship break up for much longer than it’s required. We end up in a downward spiral using the break up and the heart ache as an excuse for us not moving forward with our lives; getting trapped in vicious cycles of binge eating, self loathing, and generally being down in the dumps.

I know a girl who is still in so much pain from her break up 5 years ago. She still to this day reflects and reminisces on the relationship and what her life could be like today if they were still together, and what went wrong in the relationship, how she could have kept him if she did things differently.

Pain and suffering are addictive. The suffering of loss of a loved one is the deepest feeling of pain. In irony when we are in suffering, we feel safe – it is a place we can go to that feels comfortable and familiar, and we can, as I said above, often use it as a safe excuse to prevent us from moving forward in our lives, because forward may lead to the unknown, maybe unbearable pain, right? So why risk, if we can be in our cozy, predictable, manageable, comfort-zone pain, right? Wrong, of course.

So what if we let go of the pain and suffering of a break up in a few simple methods? What would our life be like? You and I know the answer to this. We often have this idea around break ups as being this huge ordeal; and societal pressures make us believe that we should be miserable for a long time. One societal idea I recently read was that we have to take half the time we were with the person to actually get over them – are you serious? What a waste of time and energy.

And no, it doesn’t mean we are heartless if we don’t take the ‘required’ time to get over an ex lover. This is just another stereotype we are led to believe surrounding suffering: that we are supposed to be in this constant state of suffer and non-worth of happiness. Let this go! Right now!

Here are some tips on how to let go of a past lover & heal any karmic relations.

Meditate on the Ex:

Sit quietly in a place where you are not disturbed, focus on your breathing & drop into a deep state of relaxation by bringing your awareness to your heart. Feel the heartbeat and listen to your heart: What is it saying, how does it feel? Imagine you are in your favorite place in the world – it could be out in nature or in a beautiful decorated room. Invite your ex-lover into your space. Imagine he/she is sitting directly in front of you and visualize a chord between the two of you connecting your hearts. Give gratitude to the ties between your heart and see them as loving and positive, then slowly cut the cord and release your ex-lover. Set him/her free and set yourself free.

Seeing the relationship from a higher perspective:

We grow and learn the most from our personal relationships. So seeing the relationship from a higher, more spiritual perspective is helpful. Try seeing that this person has come into your life for a perfect divine reason according to your life's purpose / mission. It could be to teach you a lesson around opening your heart more, or learning forgiveness, or acceptance. Seeing the relationship from a higher perspective and realizing that whatever lessons that were meant to be learnt from each other have just naturally come to an end will slowly ease away any anxiety around dwelling on the past / future of "what could have been".

Being present:

I know from personal experience, from when I have suffered from an ex, or felt sadness when I would start reminiscing on all the good times we had together, that is, when I start living in the past memories: when we do these things, we are taken away from THE PRESENT. When we are always living in the present, truly engaged in what we are doing 100% at any given time, we are clearly not living in a past memory. So it's always when we are taken away from the present moment that suffering occurs.

Feel the pain, completely:

Post break up, take some time for yourself. Take as long as you need, it might be a couple of hours to a couple of weeks. If we really are with ourselves and FEEL exactly how we are feeling and are completely honest with these feelings, it will ease the pain. Do whatever is necessary - it may be crying on the floor sobbing like a baby for 4 hours straight, or going and releasing some anger and frustrations in a safe method (whatever it is), or during quiet meditation – feel what your heart wants and what it needs to do to heal and go do that. Don't sweep the issues or pain under the rug, because these will always lie there dormant and unresolved.

Take responsibility:

This is a big one. The moment we take responsibility for our lives and stop using others influences on us as an excuse to not moving forward – the quicker we heal and get back in our power. It is all about your individual reaction, you have the choice at the end of the day to keep dwelling in pain, or be happy and open-hearted and allowing of all good new shiny things to flood into your life.

Above all, reach out for support but when you tell your relationship story to your friends, be sure to tell it in an empowering way; let others learn from the teachings of your life.

To go on a Nadine Lee retreat in Bali or Perth, please visit **http://nadinelee.com.au/** X

JUST IMAGINE

By Tina Kansara

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Imagine that you watched your own death. Imagine you realized that everything you thought was real was just a perception, constructed by your mind, your ego; Imagine you experienced what it felt like to lose your identity and physical reality, but understood the true essence of who you are is still alive. Imagine understanding how when you lose everything, you are the all-breathing, all-living essence of existence itself. Imagine you were free from any concept of time or space, there is no future, no past, but just that moment of reality, of existence, imagine feeling an unbounded limitless amount of love that opened your heart to something so deep, a connection to the fabric of existence, and life itself. Just imagine…

Imagine looking back at your life and seeing the orchestrated events, imagine knowing that your divine self is part of a bigger divine plan, imagine knowing there is no such thing as random and that every moment is significant, purposeful and divinely timed. Imagine knowing that you are that which goes beyond language, beyond history, imagine going to a plane of existence that feels familiar as your merge with the one consciousness, imagine feeling home when you leave the physical plane, imagine knowing that you are the ultimate infinite universe at the basest level of consciousness. Just imagine…

Imagine being the universe, all-encompassing and nothing at the same time. Imagine understanding how the universe within is the same as the universe outside, imagine understanding the cycle of creation and death as a beautiful infinite cycle of life itself, imagine understanding the beautiful feminine mother and the all-seeing father in every aspect of life, Imagine realizing that life can only understand itself through polarities, the light, the dark; the illusion, the truth; the Yin, the Yang.

Imagine in this new reality that you realize you are the created and the creator simultaneously, imagine understanding that your idea of self is nothing but your ego, the manifestation of your conditioning and experiences, an illusion, imagine understanding that life itself is created in every moment so it can experience itself, it's beauty and love in every moment. Imagine knowing that in each moment you are creating the reality you experience, that you truly manifest everything in life.

Imagine understanding that your true essence of yourself is being reflected back to you in every moment, situation, person… Imagine understanding that life is merely fragments of your highest self, and divine consciousness, imagine knowing that you are orchestrating everything in order to learn lessons and your true nature, imagine really understanding that a negative reaction is nothing but the deepest parts of yourself being denied or desired, imagine being able to see yourself in the clearest mirror that allows you to see into your soul, imagine you are able to peer into this dark place and see your shadows buried so deep, imagine seeing truth without filters, imagine seeing the world and yourself for that moment, in that moment going beyond the idea of self…

Imagine that you were shown that “life” is one entity, that all life is not actually different from one another, but that life is all the same. Imagine that you and I are of the same essence and yet we can’t recognize or comprehend it. Imagine you become the interconnected web of existence, realizing that energy is all that exists, and everything experienced through the senses are just different vibrations and frequencies of energy. Imagine understanding that all the senses are ever doing is just interpreting vibrating energy; images, sound, touch, taste, smells… Imagine feeling that energy and being that energy; imagine feeling and being the empty space in a solid rock, being the water flowing, the air moving, the stillness and silence in the background of all of existence. Imagine being that space, that space of potentiality, that space which is potential life in every moment. Imagine knowing that life in any moment is just potentiality, every seed with a potential to grow, every rain drop with a potential to flow, every emotion with a potential to know…

Imagine that you are given access to the secret to life. Imagine the universe somehow explained to you how life started, far beyond the scientific concepts of evolution or the big bang theory, far beyond the constructs of reality and the physical realm. You are being shown the secret of life by the universe and yet you ARE the universe yourself. And when you dig down to the very root of it and you’re shown the light, “Love” is the only answer and meaning there is to life. Love being beyond the idea of a definition that you can put into words, let alone the idea of “language” existing in this reality.

Now imagine coming back to “real life” from this reality where time did not exist so it felt like an eternity coming back to this world as we know it. Imagine being so far over on the other side that when you get “your life” back, the concept of an ego and the physical seem like foreign constructs to your mind. When you get it all back, when you come back to this world, you appreciate everything you have, wake up every day with a smile on your face, and never take anything for granted again… and yet you do not fear death, for you realize that fear is worse than death itself. The ability to accept anything that happens and accepting all that is before you…

…Realizing that life is the greatest gift the universe has given you, and that love is the true meaning to it all. X

“Love is the only answer and meaning there is to life.”

What is Tantric Massage?

by Cathryn Jiggens

What is the difference between tantric and erotic massage?

If you were to draw a venn diagram showing the relationship between Tantric and erotic massage practitioners in the market place, you would find that there is a huge overlapping area at the center, and two much smaller (but growing) areas of separate and ideologically quite distinct practitioners.

The purpose of this article is firstly to identify the differences – those areas where the circles do not overlap. Then acknowledging the huge overlap in the marketplace, we will look at how clients can exercise discernment when identifying the right practitioner for their needs.

Tantric massage:

Neotantric teachings came to prominence in the 1960's, early pioneers being Osho (considered by some the Grandaddy of the movement), Margot Anand and Daniel Odier. The movement has since massively proliferated with as many new influences and teachings as there are teachers in the field. No wonder it is confusing for prospective clients!

In essence though, the best description I have found to date at the essence of all teachings comes from my teacher John Hawken:

"Tantra is the dance between energy and consciousness. Reality is created through the unity of energy and consciousness, and through the unity of the divine female principle of shakti and the divine male principle of shiva."

Shiva and Shakti

You may be familiar with the image of Shiva and Shakti sitting in yab yum embrace. Some poorly framed teachings out there have led to the understanding that neotantra is about sex. Whilst sexual energy is an integral part of neotantric teachings, the central union is not about sex between a man and a woman.

It is about the unity of energy and consciousness within, enabling liberation from conditioned choices (i.e. those imposed by parents, religion, state etc.) so that we become completely free beings consciously creating our reality – either in line with our own deepest truths, with our soul contract, with spirit, or fulfilling our karmic destiny unimpeded (depending on what your belief structure is!).

Roughly speaking, the energy (or Shakti / female) aspect are our embodiment and material reality, both seen and unseen. Unseen aspects of this reality are accessed by tools such as breath work or meditation, and include maps helping us navigate the geography of the unseen, such as the shushumna, kundalini energy or chakra system.

The consciousness (or Shiva / masculine) aspect includes developing our personal awareness – e.g. noticing when we are making conditioned choices from inherited fear-based belief systems – for example, cultivating conscious sexuality. But it extends all the way through to an experientially known transpersonal awareness, one that implies both transcendence and immanence (meaning, simply put, "I experience divinity both beyond and within my being").

Neotantra tends to focus on sexuality because it is an area that has mostly been excluded from or shamed by religious and government-sanctioned teachings for the masses. This being so, sexual energy has tended to become repressed, it's ubiquity in media and on the internet mirroring the extent to which we are seeking something lost. Collectively we have much to learn simply being more conscious and personally aware about sex, and to experience it as central to our spiritual lives, or sense of meaning.

And finally as if that were not reason enough: all transformation requires energy to fuel it (e.g. we become fit by giving energy to exercise). When transforming consciousness, it is arguable that sexual energy is the most potent fuel for this activity, and that this is precisely why sexual energy has been shamed for the masses, as conscious self-actualizing people are less malleable to fear-based control systems.

So that is both the greatest potential – and some of the hype – around Tantra. The extent to which a practitioner can genuinely impart the full scope of these teachings to a client (or student?) is hugely variable. However there are a lot of practitioners out there doing a great job passing on aspects of what they themselves have learned and practice, through the vehicle of Tantra massage or related sessions. And here is the spectrum of ways they may do that, thus helping identify a genuine Tantric practitioner, if this is truly what you seek:



1. Overall – as well as receiving pleasurable massage during a session, expect to experience some kind of teaching on how you yourself can participate in awakening more pleasure.

2. The most basic teachings will include practical ways to access more of your sexual energy, through specific practices that often utilize breath, movement and sound, to break through conditioned responses (and repression of) the experience of our sexual energy.

3. They may also include teachings about ejaculatory choice for men, and how to move towards whole body (as opposed to genital) orgasmic experiences for all.

4. Or the practitioner may awaken your sexual energy in a ritual context – such as in a bathing ritual, or ritual of the 5 senses – to remind you of the sacred nature of your body and sex.

5. More experienced practitioners will begin to be able to discern and mirror back to you things you are as yet unaware of in your conditioned approach to creating reality. These might be quite practical reflections – e.g. noticing how your body is conditioned to respond to limit your sexual energy when aroused, by contracting muscles and breath.

6. Or reflections may go even deeper to look at how you are approaching many facets of your life. The practitioner's capacity to become a mentor for deep transformation may draw on other experiences and skills, such as a path of sustained deep spiritual enquiry, or western educational pathways including a myriad of mind and body healing and therapeutic modalities.

7. These reflections may also be able to bring to your awareness the causes of - and offer tools to help you move yourself beyond - experiences of erectile dysfunction or anorgasmia.

8. At this level some practitioners may be able to support the healing of sexual trauma, though it is important to be upfront if this is what you are seeking, and check how suitably mature and experienced the practitioner is to support this. Consider seeking spoken therapy prior to or alongside Tantra sessions in this instance.

Erotic massage

The misleading appellation of "Tantra" to erotic massage has become a way of hanging a pseudo spiritual cloak around sexual services, as a means to shield both practitioners and clients, from shameful societal projections about what it means to either offer or pay for a sexual service.

This tragic happenstance is at the root of much muddiness and lack of clarity in the market place. It muddies the work of genuine Tantric practitioners, and degrades collective understanding and appreciation of the potential for a truly extraordinary erotic massage experience.

Central to understanding how we can access the truly extraordinary experiences is the reframing our understanding of eroticism – and sexuality in general – as an activity that exponentially increases its potential for enjoyment, in-line with the degree of passionate engagement and awareness that we are willing to bring to it.

And if clients can cultivate their own passionate engagement with things erotic, then the likelihood will rise of finding a practitioner for whom erotic massage IS also their real passion, for there are many excellent practitioners out there. Evidence of this passion in a practitioner may be manifest in many different ways..

1. Most obvious is the evidence of an identifiable skills base. For instance, certain massage forms have evolved particularly to stimulate a sensual experience, such as the Japanese Nuru massage. Or you may look for confidence in appropriate bodywork, which has been cultivated through a sound base of massage training, intelligently applied to a passionate engagement with all things erotic.

2. Alternatively, a practitioner may demonstrate the care with which s/he has cultivated a practice, through advertising materials that combine clear and informative content with intelligent articles that demonstrate his / her unique approach to the work and erotic life in general. For instance, blog posts may provide evidence of how that practitioner's life experiences inform his / her practice.

3. If you are seeking an experience with a luxurious quality, you may look for evidence of this through care and attention paid to the details of environment, well thought through creative options on offer, and care exercised over products used during the experience.

4. Many sexuality and erotic educators have become high profile pioneering figures in the sex positive field, such as Miss Jaiya, Annie Sprinkle or Barbara Carellas, to name but a few. Perhaps your erotic masseur may have invested in their development with resources or trainings from these teachers. Or perhaps their passion will be expressed through an interest in other cultural expressions of eroticism, from erotic novels to films to which s/he can introduce you.

5. Finally, the most obvious attributes to look for are the clarity, maturity and integrity expressed through the practitioner's work.

This will be articulated through clarity of offering, clear contracts, shame-free and celebratory advertising material

Ultimately though, whilst there are now a number of identifiable schools for neotantra, and so then some consensus on the practices you may encounter in a session at the very least, the "schooling" for erotic arts at present is much more nebulous and harder to identify. So finally it is really important to say that the best erotic masseurs out there may be working away quietly doing their thing, with little fanfare or web presence to point to their work.

Someone to whom I would refer clients (when Tantra was not really what they were seeking) for the quality of her work had for many years just a simple 3 line ad in the local newspaper, with no website or nothing else to point to the amazing work she was doing. However, upon talking with her, the maturity, intelligence, enjoyment, discernment and loving presence she bought to her work would quickly be evident upon being prompted to talk about it.

How do I know which kind of practitioner is right for my needs?

This is a simple process:

- Be honest with yourself about what you are seeking!
- Find the practitioner who offers exactly that.
- Be clear and upfront with him / her when discussing your needs
- Don't be afraid to probe into a practitioner's experience.

Much of the huge unclear areas where erotic and Tantric massage overlap is the result of erotic massage being hidden as something else that sounds more spiritual, and therefore more acceptable in a society that shames the buying or selling of sexual services.

Genuine Tantric practitioners who lack confidence may give up the educational aspect of their work, when faced with an endless stream of clients who really want an erotic leisure experience and spirituality or transformation is not really on their agenda.

Equally, erotic masseurs may miss the potential for passion and pride to be expressed through skills and professionalism, because they do not see that potential mirrored back to them by our collective belief systems.

Finally, clients seeking the best practice in either circumstance may become disillusioned by a string of poor experiences and give up the search.

I am proud therefore to be part of a growing collective movement of professionals, activists and practitioners, both erotic and tantric and beyond – seeking to address appalling gaps in our collective sexual awareness! X

INTERVIEW

RAW

An Introduction To

TANTRA

with Shashi Solluna

froodmat / photocase.com

Steve: Hi everyone. Welcome to another Raw Attraction Magazine Podcast. This month we have Shashi Solluna on, someone I've wanted to get on for quite a while now. She's a traveler, been living Bali. She's got books coming out, works in the realm of Tantra. I'm very pleased to have her on. Hi to you, Shashi.

Shashi Solluna: Hi. [laughs]

Steve: Well, my introduction probably wasn't complete, so could you tell us a little bit more about you?

Shashi: Yeah, it was a good summary. I've had a path of a lot of travel and a lot of Tantra. I've really been in the East since I was around the age of 18 when I went to India and I discovered Tantra. I was actually, first of all, not looking for Tantra. I was looking for truth and spiritual parts. I realized that I wasn't integrating the piece from my meditation mat into my relationships.

I found Tantra, and I've been into the field of Tantra for 15 years now. I'm writing a book with HayHouse next year. I'm making a film about Tantra and I'm leading teacher trainings. I'm truly passionate about the subject.

Steve: Let's dive in a little more. We want to talk about opening sexual energy to begin with. The first question is: "What does opening sexual energy mean?", because the average person probably may have an idea, but there's a lot more to it than the average person in the street would know. How would you start off with this subject?

Shashi: What I love about the field of Tantra is that it really goes into the subject of sexual energy. There's a lot of energy around sexuality. All of our society is quite obsessed with it, but they don't really have much awareness on the energy, the amazing amount of energy. Therefore, people are using their sexual energy, a lot of times, in unconscious ways.

To open our sexual energy, often we would use the term "activation" to activate our life force energy. It's really a path of many practices and intention to enable this very potent energy to flow into our bodies and all the way through our beings, so that instead of contracting around this energy and pushing it out of our bodies, which is what people very frequently do, we want to turn around and say yes to this energy, and let it flow through us.

Let's look in a little more detail to explain what that means, if we look at orgasm which is a very strong expression of sexual energy, most cultural pornography and so on teaches us to get very contracted around this energy.

As you get turned on, you clench all your muscles and you're like, "Uh, uh, uh, uh, uh, uhh" and then we release, because we can't hold so much with our contracted muscles. Eventually, you're going to have this big release like a sneeze. At that moment, you just discharge all the sexual energy out of your body again. If you're a man, you ejaculate at that moment.

What Tantra does that's different from that is, as energy's building, as we're getting turned on, as we're getting aroused, you actually meet it with relaxation. It doesn't mean you get less aroused; you just get aroused in a very, very, very different way. You feel the energy and you relax and, from "Ohhh", you've got, "Ahhh."

You have to let it rise up through your body. Then it actually gets up out of the genitals. It starts rising up through your body. It cracks into your heart. It blows your heart open to love and to emotion. It can rise up into higher centers. It can shift your whole state of consciousness. If it reaches up to the crown, it can give you an amazing enlightened state where you feel connected until you release.

Steve: Personally, I have opened my body to Kundalini energy much more in the last couple of years. There is a dramatic difference from before like you're saying, from the sneezing orgasms to now, when if I'm tapped on the back of my spine or even licked on my neck, these orgasmic things happen.

In terms of Kundalini energy, could you talk about how it's linked to the chakras and what the chakras are, for people that don't really know?

Shashi: Let's see. An easy way to look at this is to imagine our body is like a flute, like a musical instrument. It plays a different note just like a flute does when you cover a different hole. As sexual energy flows through the lower chakras - that's around the genitals for example -, it has a deeper resonance. It's more earthy or animalistic sexuality for example, a part that just wants to go at it. Even our sexual noises would be more like, "Uh, uh, uhh," and deeper.

As the energy rises as it goes up, we look at seven different notes generally through our musical instruments, which we called seven chakras. These are different resonances of the life force energy as it flows through us. The root is more animalistic.

As it rises up to the second note, or the second chakra, it's more sensual, more of an "Ahh" sort of feeling, sensuality and fluidity. Rising up into the third chakra, it's more like fire. We can really raise a powerful sexual energy - hair pulling, biting, and a wild energy that can feel quite scary the first time it starts to activate. It's a very powerful, passionate energy.

As it rises into the fourth chakra, the sound here is moving through the heart, so it changes into an airy, more loving, caressing, angelic energy pouring through the heart. That's where we begin to connect with each other as lovers on a much deeper, more profound level.

Beyond the fourth chakra, as we move through them, if energy rises all the way up into the throat chakra, we can enter states of lovemaking where we move beyond space and beyond time. This is where this kind of Tantric lovemaking has its reputation of taking hours, because if energy rises to this place, you lose yourself in a very blissful way.

Consciousness is there. Awareness is there, but you're really beyond space and time. Then there's a sixth chakra which is located around the eyes, between the eyes, the third eye. If energy rises to the third eye, you can literally change your vision.

You could be looking at your partner making love and start seeing a god or a goddess, start seeing them glowing, seeing their aura, just seeing a radiance and a beauty in them that doesn't even look human. You're really seeing their divine nature. This is the third eye opening.

The seventh chakra, as I mentioned before, is the crown. If sexual energy rises all the way up to the crown, there's a feeling of all separation dissolving. You no longer feel like a separate individual getting on with your life and doing your thing. You feel interconnected with all that is. This is a kind of spiritual experience. Different people describe it in different ways.

It's completely fulfilling. The moment that you're there, there's nothing left that you want or desire. You're just interconnected with all that is. This is a very peek experience that many Tantrics aim towards experiencing.

Steve: Wow. People are probably questioning now how you even begin to start moving that energy from the sneezing orgasm to up the spine and beyond. Where do you even start?

Shashi: This is a very good question. What's really important is that we take our time and understand the importance of the process. We're such a consumerist society. We tend to think, "Oh, I want that peak experience. Let me just try and force it somehow."

If we force an experience that we're not ready to handle, it can be too much and we can't integrate. It's really important in all systems of Daoism and Tantra, working with sexual energy, that we actually follow a number of steps and take our time.

There are different paths. Classical Tantra would use yoga, and Daoism would use Chi-Kung exercises that help to work with our energetic bodies and our physical bodies. It's a little bit like "plumbing" to clear the pipes ready to receive the energy in.

There are a number of different approaches we can take. For those who are listening now who are thinking, "Well, what's the very first step I can do?" the first step to do is to observe yourself orgasming next time and just see how contracted your body is.

Before even reaching orgasm, when you're first getting turned on, how much contraction do you have? Do you clench your jaw? Do you start squeezing your muscles? You can just experiment by relaxing the muscles as you see them contract and taking deep breath. Breath is so key, because breath and energy are next to each other. Sometimes we even use the word "Prana" to mean the breath and the energy, or the chi.

The breath is really crucial. If somebody wanted to have their first little go at things, their little experiment, it would be to just relax and breathe more deeply whilst they're becoming aroused and just observe. Just simply observe how the sexual energy flows in their body in a different way from their normal habit.

Steve: How much time and how much patience do we need with working this? You outlined all the different types of orgasmic experience and energy movement we can have. What kind of time path are we talking about to try and experience these things? Is it months, years, a lifetime?

Shashi: [laughs] Luckily most Tantrics so enjoy the path that they stop worrying about the destination. Actually, if you think about it, the path of lovemaking is such an enjoyable path that it's not about the destination so much. Each step along the way is thoroughly enjoyable. That takes a lot of the pressure off.

If you were sitting meditating, if you were in a torturous aesthetic path where you're sitting meditating in a cave, starving yourself, and you're suffering, you might be thinking, "How long until I get enlightened?" If you're a Tantric, you actually are so happy along the path that it's enjoyable anyway. [laughs]

There is no way of answering your question. Like you said, lifetimes, we will have different lifetimes to arrive where we're at. Some people seem to be natural Tantrics. They go to a couple of classes, and they're automatically already moving their energy in very powerful ways. Other people take a lot more time with each practice.

I don't think it matters. What matters is that we're true to where we are at. We never try and push ourselves or anyone else because sexual energy is strong. One of the reasons we don't want to push is because sexual energy is creative energy. It can create a baby, for example.

It's very, very powerful. What we don't want to do is push too much energy and power into what's called an "impure system." For example, if you have a lot of anger, if you're an angry person, and then you start building a lot of sexual energy, you might actually get extremely angry, because it increases everything that's there.

Along with building sexual energy, the classical parts of Tantra and Daoism always had a kind of purification system at the same time that they helped you to clear out distortions in your energy field that feel negative, things that you don't want to increase more of.

You can see that as the ego self, the small self. There are many different definitions for it. Either way we want to be a clear channel so that it's just pure life force flowing through us. There is no hurry, and it's important that we take time to take each step and not to force energy.

Steve: What are the blocks that are stopping us, perhaps culturally or even physically, from experiencing these things that you talk about?

Shashi: That's a very good word that you brought up, "blocks", because, yeah, that's how it's seen. If there is a distortion or a block in one of our chakras or in our being, that's going to get in the way, and a lot of them come from our culture.

All of us are different. We all have a different set of whatever was imposed upon us as we grew up, whoever our teachers are. For example, lower chakra blocks would be around if you're uncomfortable with your nudity. Are you comfortable with yourself as a kind of animal with sweat and juices coming out of you and a sexual drive? Are you comfortable with that?

If you're uncomfortable, if you were brought up to kind of ignore that and pretend it doesn't exist, then your basic vitality can't activate. When energy activates at the root chakra, it comes in the form of vitality, aliveness.

If people are over- cultured [laughs], they're very polite and in total denial of their physicality, their body, and their animal instincts, they also are lacking in connecting to this vital force. An amazing way to wake up the root chakra is actually African dancing, kind of wild, passionate dancing with the feet really hitting the floor and the bum really shaking, dancing to drums, really getting that animalistic, tribal energy going.

It also shakes off any cultural sort of holding ourselves together and being terribly British. We can shake all of that off and get a bit wild. Then you feel really vital and alive. Each chakra works like this. There are places where culture may have shut us down, and we want to awaken our nature.

I always see the path of returning to sexual energy as being "Let's clear the cultural ideas of who we think we should be, including our cultural sexual archetypes of what we think is sexy and we try to embody it to please someone else."

Let's throw all that aside, and let's investigate who am I naturally. How does nature move through me? There are all these aspects, all these elements, from being wild and animalistic to being deeply loving. That's all in our nature. We're uncovering that and throwing away the blocks which are merely identities that culture has given us.

We only put on those identities because we want to be liked. It's a path of empowerment where we go, "I'm not going to pretend to be this and that to try and get people's approval. I'm dedicated to finding out my true nature and embodying it."

Sex is a wonderful way to do that, of course, because you can't really hold the mask on. [laughs] You can try. You always hear of these women who keep lots of makeup and try and keep their hair all perfect and whatever, but at the end of the day, sex is a powerful force. It's a great way to rip off masks, become truly naked, and return to being who we really are.

Steve: For those couples I'm thinking that, perhaps, sex is getting a big same-y. Even couples who are trying Tantra and perhaps one partner doesn't want to explore as much as the other or something… in terms of exploring this with a partner, what kind of commitment do you need to give to each other? Is there any advice you could give around that?

Shashi: That's an interesting point. We all have different levels of energy and enthusiasm. That's natural. I don't think we should expect our partner to love everything we love and be enthusiastic. There's another thing that you mentioned, the word "commitment," which is a word I love.

I always say we often make the mistake of thinking we're committing to another human being, and other people change so much. Actually, if we're committed together to something higher than us, if we're committed to unconditional love, committed to spirit, committed to evolution, expansion, light, whatever the couple chooses, then that commitment will hold the couple in a very beautiful way.

We have to allow one another to have different desires and energies. The beautiful thing about Tantra is that it's not just about making love. There are so many ways to commune and to create intimacy: eye contact, holding hands, breathing together, giving one another massages, dancing for each other, blindfolding each other and feeding each other pieces of mango and chocolate, doing rituals together; just so many wonderful ways to connect.

This also allows for imbalances. Maybe one of you is full, full, full of sexual energy and raring to go and the other one is exhausted. The one with a lot of energy should offer to give a massage to the one who is exhausted. Then they can transmit that energy as a gift to their beloved.

Or they could dance for them. Say the woman is really up for it and full of energy and the guy has just come back from work. He's a bit exhausted. He could sit down like a Tantric prince upon a cushion. She could light candles.

She could put on her beautiful, sensual clothes and dance like a Tantric priestess for him because she has all the energy. Then she will give energy to him. This is the beauty of Tantra. She will awaken him and activate him.

There's always ways of working with energy imbalances where we don't have to expect a partner to meet us where we're at. We can begin to see that energy can be a gift we can give to one another, and this takes so much pressure off a relationship as well.

Steve: It sounds, by the way you explain it, that it's a commitment to love and joy, which, if you have that as a fundament of a relationship, then it's a recipe for success. Would you agree?

Shashi: Yeah, absolutely. We want a lot of freedom these days in our modern world, but we've made the mistake of sort of throwing away the word commitment only because we've seen very poor models of commitment in the past, of course. There is a higher level of commitment.

If a couple sits down and discusses together, like if you were running a business together, you would always sit and say, "What's the vision of this business?" Then if you both agreed, you would run a business together. Couples rarely ever sit down and say, "What's your highest vision for being in a relationship?"

This is tremendously important because you're putting so much energy and time into a relationship. If you both know, "Well, I'm really committed to love, and that means when there isn't love happening right now because we're having a big argument, I am still committed to that love. I will show up and do whatever I feel guided to do to return to love," this kind of level of commitment holds a relationship actually.

It's like we need that higher help. We need it because there are rocky times in all relationships. Tantra sees a relationship as a sort of spiritual or divine meeting, so you need a higher light, love, or spirit - whatever name the couple feel to call it - something that you're aiming towards, something that you're dedicated to.

Steve: I completely agree. This commitment thing, the default thing is to buy a wedding ring, isn't it?

Shashi: Yeah, and we commit to the personality of the other person. That's so difficult because the personality can change. Then you feel trapped or you feel like, "Oh, I liked you when you were like this, and now you're like that." We don't allow each other to change and grow. This is tremendously important, that we know what we're committing to.

Also when it comes to sex and sexual union, if it's only for personal pleasure, then we put a lot of pressure on each other. It's like, "Oh, I need this, and you need that." It's all about a kind of give and take thing. It becomes kind of like a bargain. It's like, "You're not pleasuring me enough," or, "I want to be pleasured like this."

Again, it's like, "Why are we making love?" Let's make love so that we can really make love here. [laughs] Let's be dedicated to love. We all have funky moments, things coming up, or moments when there's closure.

Instead of feeling disappointed or frustrated that something has gone wrong, we show up for each other. We hold each other through challenging moments. We're there because we're committed to love. This also changes it around. It kind of puts the personal out of the way and puts something higher in place.

Steve: That's definitely something for the listeners to think about. We've covered so much ground here. Everyone is going to go away with so much. To wrap up, what kind of action points would you have people think about or do?

Shashi: There are two things for people to look at. First of all, a major distinction is, "Is somebody in a couple, or is somebody single?" Those would be different paths. Couples can enter Tantra together, but then a lot of single people think, "Oh well, where do I find a partner? I want to do Tantra."

A very important message is to say, "You don't need a partner to start on your journey into Tantra, because Tantra and Daoism are about connecting to your sexual energy." Actually, and especially in the Daoist system, they always said, "Go activate your own energy first." It's actually something you can do alone.

The vital energy comes from the Earth. This is where it's sourced from, which is why, as I said, this kind of African dancing or anything that connects you to the Earth and to nature actually increases your vitality. That's why people go into nature when they're sick, because there's a lot of life force energy there.

People can start to activate their own sexual energy. A great way is going into nature. There are yoga postures, Chi-Kung moves, African dancing, like I said, different ways to start activating energy. Then, of course, they can find a Tantra teacher, a Daoist teacher, to start working with to learn some of the tools and techniques.

Solo practices are kind of seen as tuning your instrument. You begin to, then, shift your vibration. Actually then you're more likely to attract a very different kind of person and a very different kind of lover into your life.

If someone is single, go for it. You don't need to wait. There are increasingly more online course appearing as well. I'm currently working together with a team called "LiveTantra.com" to start building online courses to bring many practices to people so they can start already.

However, there is no substitute for working with a real teacher because a teacher can give you feedback and guidance. It's a lot quicker. This is also a great way to go. I find the best way to find a teacher is actually to kind of sit in meditation or prayer and just ask the universe to bring the right teacher to you. [laughs]

Then listen to the synchronicities because the right teacher always shows up for us, so that's a good way to go. Then if somebody is in a couple, they can actually look for a couples' training. A wonderful teacher called Sarita from Tantra Essence runs a couples' training that teaches couples many different ways to connect, to make love, to work with energy, intimacy, emotional issues.

This is a fantastic way for couples to work. It's important when you're picking Tantra workshops, to check in what kind of Tantra workshop it is to find the right one for you.

I just made a blog, actually, an article on LiveTantra.com, with quite a few of the different types of Tantra out there, because it can be quite confusing if people are just stepping into it for the first time. It's worth just knowing a little bit so you can find exactly the right class, the right teacher for you.

Steve: What about yourself? You've got a website and a book coming out.

Shashi: The book I'm writing with HayHouse is going to be a book on love, and how to work with challenging moments in relationships, how to return to love. That won't be out until next year, but it will be with Hay House. People can keep their eye open for that.

My film is called "Sex to Spirit," and it's online at SexToSpirit.com. In that we followed one man on his journey through Tantra. That's a great peep into his very secretive, private world, and seeing it reveal. I've got quite a lot of material coming out. I run teacher trainings every year as well, as I said. That's for people who want to go really deep into them.

If people are just starting off, a really great way is to go to a Tantra festival. We have them now all over the place in the UK, across Europe. We're having the first one in the United States in September, "The Creating Life Festival."

We've got a lot of festivals happening, and they're a brilliant way for people to actually find a teacher they want to work with and get a taste because there are usually about five or six teachers. They can try out different things and see what works for them. There's plenty of ways for people to jump into the Tantra world, and find out which way works for them.

Steve: Thank you so much for your time. It's been a pleasure talking to you.

Shashi: Thank you, and thank you for all the work you're doing to bring this important message into the world.

Steve: My pleasure. X

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SHANA Q&A

RAW

Dear Shana, I have been through so much healing from my childhood, past relationships and simply being human. Does it ever stop? I just want to love myself and live in a happy relationship! David, 32. London.

Q

Dear David,

I sense frustration with a never-ending array of situations that seem to demand attention and healing. I have been in your shoes and asked the same question... had a similar desire for a happy relationship. I commend you for being willing to do the work to find deeper fulfillment. The more willing you are, the more healing tends to happen and ultimately the more love you'll be able to give and receive.

There's an interesting question that I'm excited to pick apart. "Does it ever stop?"

It hasn't stopped for me yet and my sense is that it may not, that life is an ever-unfolding exploration that inspires us to grow, deepen and love more fully, until you perhaps awaken beyond your personality structure.

It sounds like you want it [however you define "it"] to stop. Which highlights a part of your relationship to the process of healing. How we relate to our experience determines how much we suffer. Wanting it to stop may be the very stance that has it continuing!

Rather than wanting it to stop or be different than it is, you have to ask yourself what it would take for you to love yourself in the midst of whatever challenges you are currently facing, . What would it take for you to choose to be compassionate and curious with yourself, now, rather than beat yourself up?

Choosing self-love, moment to moment, is the "short cut" I've found to more happiness. As well as understanding human nature. (I suggest the former as a short-term life-long path and the latter as a long-term life-long path.)

Your question is a deep one so I turn to the masters. One of my teachers, A.H. Almaas wrote this:

"If you just stop believing that you are your history, if you really let go, if you see that's not you, all that happened in your childhood will be gone. You will be completely new. What happens now might cause you suffering, but what your mother did, what your father did, whatever depression or war you lived through is gone. They exist only in your mind. So we realize that a deeper cause of our suffering is that we hold on to the past, and we hold on to it in a certain way. We use the past to determine what we are. The past generates our concepts, our beliefs about who we are and about what reality is."

Sit with that for a while!

A last note: How you define "happy" can set you up for either fulfillment or a feeling of failure. If you think of a"happy" relationship as one without any disagreements or anything to work through, you are essentially denying what it is to be human. Then, when these situations inevitably arise, you'll be likely to think you're doing something wrong, and that is certainly not a recipe for happiness.

What context do you hold for being in relationship? Why are you choosing to be in relationship? In my experience, the more you hold growth as an inevitable part of the context, the "happier" you will be.

Love,

Shana X

LIMITLESS RELATIONSHIPS

RAW

Simple Truths to Beating Jealousy

by Bryan Reeves

emoji / photocase.com

Jealousy.

That scourge of intimacy that, at its worst, can rob even the sanest person of his or her mental stability as it drags them disoriented and damned into a fiery living nightmare where they're likely to be tortured by their own fantastical fictions.

When jealousy settles into a relationship, the consequences can be severe, even fatal.

It happened to me a few years back.

Jealousy ate me and a past love alive from the inside out like Ebola. Relentless and ferocious, it took five years to eviscerate our relationship of every beautiful possibility it began with. When it finally finished us off, jealousy had left us with little but rage, resentment and regret that took years to heal.

Jealousy essentially boils down to this: "I'm horrified you're not going to choose me."

It gets really bad when that horror grabs our innards and makes us act in awful ways that drive the person of our yearning even farther away – if not physically, then emotionally and psychologically.

After all, who in their right mind happily chooses to be with a crazy person?

That's what jealousy can do: make us act insane.

My ex-girlfriend once wrecked her car while driving all fast and furious to disrupt a lunch I told her I was having with a woman she didn't want me lunching with. I knew this woman was no threat to our relationship; I wasn't nearly as attracted to her as I was to my girlfriend. But my girlfriend was caught up in the fear-fueled fantasy that I was choosing this other woman instead of her.

You can't make someone choose you. Why would you want to, anyway?

Actually, here's why: when we believe that another person's love, affection, attention or validation is the source of our sense of self-worth or identity, we'll do almost anything to make them stay. We'll use fear, guilt, coercion, even shame and force to keep them around.

Ironically, the consequences of such adversarial actions usually keep away the very things we ache for: connection, trust, appreciation, fulfillment, joy, love.

Have you ever really felt appreciative and loving towards someone who used fear or force to make you do what they wanted?

I haven't. I might have done the thing they wanted, but I secretly resented them for it. Or I resented myself for choosing to live out their desires at the precious cost of my own.

There are two powerful truths that can help us beat jealousy and create thriving intimate relationships:

1. Your partner will either choose you every day or she (he) won't.

There's nothing wrong with not choosing the partner you're with today. It happens all the time and doesn't even have to mean the end of the relationship. It shows up in lots of ways: prioritizing work or kids over partner, emotionally checking out, cheating, breaking up.

Regardless of what it looks like, relationships begin to break down when one or both partners stop consistently choosing the other.

In my jealousy-infected relationship, I loved my girlfriend, but in my immaturity and ignorance, I too often chose friends, work and other priorities over her, like lunch with another woman I was not even romantically interested in. She then punished me by abusing me verbally and withholding love in countless ways. This only reinforced my ignorance-fueled drive to choose others more, which only fueled her anger more. That nasty cycle drove us deep into that years-long living nightmare I described above.

A thriving, sustainable, intimate relationship is one in which two people consciously and consistently choose each other over other possibilities, day after day – and in which they both work to communicate that ongoing choice to each other in tangible ways every day.

I believe we all yearn not merely to be with someone, but to be with someone that we enthusiastically choose every day, and who enthusiastically chooses us every day, too.

Why would we want to experience anything less than that?



2. Your partner is not the source of your self-worth or self-respect.

It used to be devastating when a woman I wanted didn't choose me. It would trigger old and excruciating wounds of unworthiness and disconnection. A woman's rejection just confirmed what I feared most about myself: I'm not good enough or worthy of love.

I've discovered that's an awful lie I've been living inside for a long time – that so many of us live inside.

As a progeny of Life itself, I am an absolute miracle in this very moment, no matter what I look like, how much money I have, whether my grammar is perfect or my socks match.

Whether a woman chooses me or not, the fact that I am Earth itself, come alive, walking around with a brain and a heart and the ability to string words into sentences, makes me entirely worthy of love and admiration. You too are a wondrous miracle of Earth come alive,

the end product in this moment after billions of years of stars exploding and reforming, primordial stuff being ripped apart and then fused back together in infinite experimental forms since the beginning of time.

We completely forget how miraculous every one of us humans is for simply being alive.

If you think about it, it's just unnecessary to make other two-legged earth-bodies the arbiters of our self-worth when they're just as ignorant as we are about what the heck we're actually doing here, wandering as we are about this lonely space planet.

Now that I really get that my partner isn't the source of my self-worth, I can let her choose whatever she wants for herself. She's free to be her and I'm free to be me.

In fact, beating jealousy really comes down to making peace with this simple truth: she is either going to choose me or she isn't.



Whether she chooses me or not, that says nothing about who I actually am.

If I try to make her choose what isn't deeply true for her, she'll just resent me for it.

Curiously, though, I've found this opens up an exciting possibility.

When we allow our partners the sincere freedom to choose as they desire – even to the extent that we make peace with the possibility that they may actually not choose us – we often become even more attractive to them.

For the one thing most people so deeply want in an intimate relationship is to be with a partner who not just accepts them for who they truly are, but who enthusiastically chooses them for it.

If your partner doesn't enthusiastically choose you, let them go.

Besides, you want a partner, not a prisoner.

Byron Katie said, "When someone leaves me, I know I've been spared."

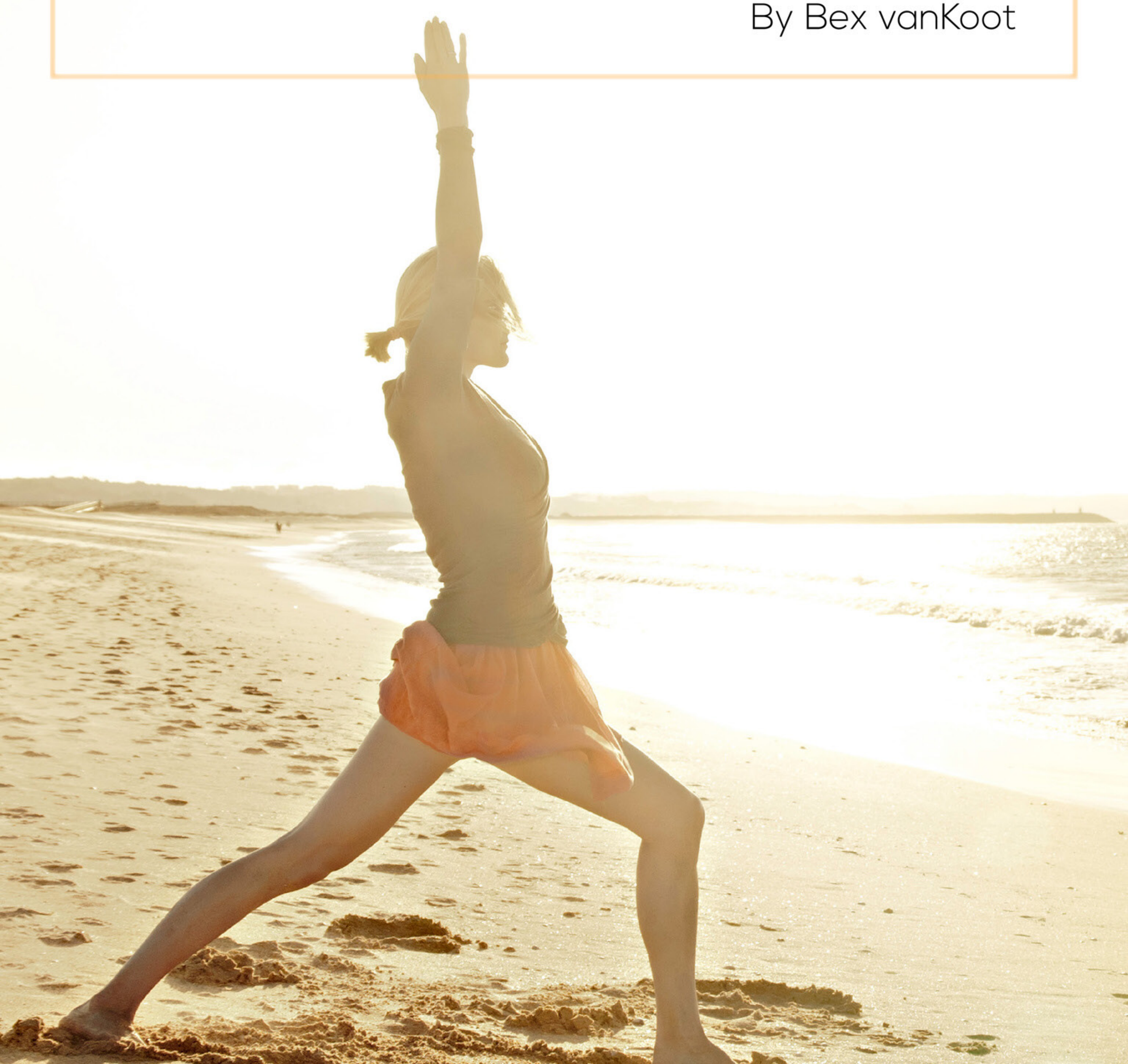
If your partner chooses another, allowing them the freedom to do so and letting them go simply means you're sparing yourself from someone who isn't choosing you. If that's still not ok with you, think that maybe they just don't know how to choose someone. I didn't know how to really choose a woman until I recently hit 40 and finally saw the innocence in my ignorance.

I know it isn't easy, and it might sting… a lot sometimes. But in letting someone go who isn't enthusiastically choosing you, you make room for someone who will.

That's so worth waiting for, and making yourself available for. X

RELATIONSHIP YOGA:
EXPLORING NON-ATTACHMENT

By Bex vanKoot



The benefits of yoga are often flaunted in terms of the physical; tight abs, impressive flexibility, and yoga is also devised as a means to improve meditation, concentration and connection.

Yoga is a philosophy. It is a collection of guidelines for how to live in the world, to be good to ourselves, to the earth, and to each other. It has the power not just to change our bodies, or even our minds, but our hearts and souls as well. It can strengthen the bonds between us and help us to be better lovers, partners and friends. The yoga mindset can really benefit our relationships and our love lives.

While the many aspects of yoga philosophy aim to work in unison to create change, the most powerful lesson I have integrated from my lessons is to embrace the concept of non-attachment.

Aparigraha is one of the five yamas (restraints) in the Eight Limbs of Yoga, codified by Patanjali in the yoga sutras more than 1600 years ago. The word is often translated as non-greed, non-possessiveness, or non-attachment. It specifically refers to having only a desire for possessing, that which is necessary in the context of one's own life.

Got Non-Attachment?

In other words, non-attachment looks different on different people, from the wandering ascetic monk to the polyamorous hippie commune. How you do non-attachment will depend on who you are, what you do, where you live and who you love. And learning ways to practice this mindset can impact our relationships with others in surprising and powerful ways.

1. Non-Monogamy and More

When this subject comes up in discussion circles, it almost always comes around to jealousy and monogamy first. For culturally monogamous creatures, we tend to be very fascinated with the possibilities that lie outside those rules.

Monogamy isn't for everyone. But it's also true that non-monogamy isn't for everyone!

Any yogi who tells you that the only way to be spiritually enlightened is to give up on monogamy is someone whose motives I would be questioning. How you love is up to you and certainly isn't any indication of some "hierarchical level" of attachment.

Let those ideas fade away for a moment and instead consider: Why are you monogamous? This isn't meant to challenge your decision about this way of doing relationships, but rather empower you to see why monogamy really works for you. What are the benefits for you and your lover? How does it make your relationship stronger and closer?

Now what role does jealousy play in your decision? Do you experience it? When?

Think about the times you have felt jealousy and try to trace what other emotions may have gone hand in hand with that feeling. I've experienced jealousy when I am feeling scared or lonely, left out, tired, overworked, and bored. There can be a lot of reasons that make me experience a negative reaction to something positive in my partner's life, and a lot of it has very little to do with sex.

It has to do with attachment.

Most of us experience jealousy as the negative consequences of attachment to desire. We want something – to be loved, to go out and have fun, to be wanted, to have pleasure, to relax – so profoundly that we actually feel bad when our partner attains that same desire. Certainly we experience jealousy in other contexts, as reactions to betrayal and other serious problems in a relationship.

But haven't you ever just felt jealous of your lover because you know they got to eat chocolate ice cream earlier and you didn't? Or they get an extra day off work? Or someone pays them more attention than you think they pay to you?

These are things that are largely out of your partner's control. And they definitely aren't something that it seems rational to fight over. And yet, like most of you, I've felt the sting of jealousy!

In circles of non-monogamy, there is a movement to cultivate the opposite of that pain, with the slow, happy burn of compersion – the feeling of joy we can experience when our loved ones feel pleasure.

2. Personal Goals (and Personal Time)

One of the distinct pleasures of being human is the joy of having, striving for and reaching your goals. But practising non-attachment can change the way you feel about having hopes and dreams.

Take some time to think about what goals you have for your life, both personally and as a couple. Are these goals that you've shared with each other? Now consider, are there any chances you've missed, opportunities you regret leaving behind, because of an attachment to your goals and dreams? What happens, in the future, if you don't have the life you hope?

In other words, can you work towards goals without getting attached to them?

Our attachment to a perfect vision of the future, the so-called "relationship escalator" that we are each expected to ride from first date to deathbed, keeps us from experiencing authentic connections and having realistic expectations of the people we love.

What expectations do you have for yourself and your partner that aren't realistic, or in line with your individual desires? Are there any ways that your shared trajectory and your personal desires conflict? Take some time to think about this.

When my partner and I experience the most conflict in our relationship, it is during the times when we are in desperate need of non-attachment. We each find ourselves attached to different, unsatisfactory solutions to a challenging problem. And it isn't until we break our feedback loop and look outside ourselves that we start to see new options.

In other words, if it feels like you don't know which way is up, or how to make the right decision about where your relationship is going, you need fewer personal goals and more personal time. Get out of the house. Go be interesting. Do something fun. Meet someone new. Make friends, influence people. Get some new connections firing up in your brain before you sit down to talk things out again.

3. Dollars, Decisions, Division of Labour, and Doing the Deed

It's the reason most couples fight, get divorced, or cheat and it's the thing most likely to land in the spotlight when non-attachment comes up.

Energy exchange.

How much money you each make, who makes important decisions, which particular household jobs and chores are best suited to each of your personalities, when and where and how you have sex, each of these aspects of your relationship are vulnerable to misguided expectations and damaging attachments.

What beliefs do you hold onto about money, what it means to make it and who is responsible for it? How do you support each other and give energy and love to the relationship?

While most couples fight about these issues, few actually talk about them, especially in the early stages of a relationship when no one wants to imagine that anything could possibly ever go wrong.

It may seem trivial at first, but after a few months or a few years under the same roof, you will be happy you took the time to talk about how to balance your bank accounts and booty calls, about who is going to work and when, what your need for clean is like and how to make it all work in a way that gives you the most time and energy to enjoy your life together.

Great Expectations

When it comes to romantic relationships, we talk a lot about "deal-breakers" - the expectations we have that we are willing to put out there from the beginning, things we know aren't negotiable. But most of us have many more presumptions than we are willing to admit to ourselves. What if your hopes and expectations for your partner, your attachment to the person you want them to be and the relationship you want to have are getting in the way of having a deeper love with the person they are now?

Take notice of any moment you find yourself reacting in anger or frustration, out of habit rather than conscious thought, to something your partner has done, or hasn't done, or said, or didn't say. Take your attachment to whatever it is that sparked your reaction with you to the mat. Sit with it in meditation, move with it through yoga or dance. Write it down or paint it. Let the bonds that tie you to the negative emotions loosen until you can see what's at the heart of that grasping.

Let go and make more space for love. X



THE TRUTH FOR

MEN

RAW

BREAKING UP: LOSING A GODDESS

by David Bruce Leonard

Not every woman is for everyone. There are thousands of incredible men out there and an equal number of wonderful potential female partners, but they are not interchangeable. In other words, one wonderful woman who is perfect for a wonderful man may not be a match for another wonderful man. Neither one is better nor worse; they are just not matched. At some point we may need to end our relationship with our partner, or she with us. Perhaps we have changed, she has changed, or we just aren't as happy as we might be. But leaving or being left by a partner is no small matter and doing it well will test our integrity more than any other time in our relationship. It is also the time when the largest of our shadows may arise, and, (if we are willing to gaze upon it) the mirror becomes the least flattering. When we separate from our partner we should not need to take our balls back, we should not have lost track of them in the first place. If we have lost them; it is time to reclaim them.

The clarity needed to end a relationship exists on a continuum. We can always look back and say, "Damn! I should have left sooner!" or "Damn! I shouldn't have left at all!" It's a slippery slope of knowledge, and the answers that reveal themselves may be very different depending on where we are in our lives and the nature of our relationship.

In relationship, our damaged parts are most clearly revealed and exposed. When we love a partner, those damaged and fragile parts are magnified as they float to the surface how we react to that vulnerability is a measure of our courage.

We will always return to our pain, to the suppressed part of our psyche that wants to be whole. Our pain can be deep, almost unfathomable, but it will heal if we allow it. That pain is a compass that points to our healing, not only of our relationship, but also of our life. Any emotional pain at any time in our life is a potential portal into our healing. That needle on our compass of pain points toward our balls. We must accept the part we've played in breaking our own hearts, and understand how we may have led ourselves into crisis. Those women that have broken our hearts… if we let them, they can be our greatest teachers.

Yes, our hearts have been broken, but they have also been cracked open.

The Gift of crisis: Cracking open the heart

When we return to our pain, to our shadow, we return to the dark parts of ourselves that we have not yet faced. We spend the first twenty years of our life creating shadow, and creating strategies to compensate for that shadow. And then, if we are somewhat lucky, and somewhat lucid, we spend the next sixty to eighty years unraveling what we have created. Over time, or if there is upheaval or trauma, our compensation strategies wear thin… they don't work as well as they used to. When those strategies can no longer keep our shadow hidden, a bright painful light may be shed upon them. This light can hurt. Then we are not only faced with an unpleasant sight, but we do not yet have any integrated, healthier strategies with which to replace the old ones. The shock of seeing our shadow emerging into light is called crisis. Properly handled, crisis can be the greatest gift we will ever receive.



emoji / photocase.com

When we are in crisis we have access to places in ourselves that in happier times, are much more difficult to access. When we are in crisis, a door appears to us, inviting us to come through. That door is usually the last place we want to go. We may choose to walk through that door, or we may refuse. But the minute we locate our balls and we walk through that door, our healing begins… we are on our way home. The secret gift that crisis brings us is pain and most of us only change when it's too painful not to. The last thing any of us ever really want to do is change our behavior. But often it is this very change of behavior that brings us home to ourselves and nourishes the growth of our roots.

Yes, we have choices. We can take a good long painful look into that mirror, walk through that door and return home, or we can turn away from the door and put the mirror back in the drawer.

If we wait long enough, the pain of our crisis will diminish. And it will diminish whether we choose to walk through that door or not. The irony of our pain is that we have a window of time during which we must take that leap into the abyss of pain, into the unknown. The great tragedy is that if we choose to not walk through that door, it will close again. Then, we might have to wait another ten to fifteen years before we get another opportunity. We arguable only get four to five opportunities to create deep healing during our lifetime. Of course, the door doesn't go away. It's always there. It's just much harder to access when we are not in pain.

The purpose of crisis is to crack open our heart. Our tears moisten our soil, allowing our roots to penetrate as we find our way home. It is in this way that our pain, and our partner, can each by a great gift to us. As our partner, and her loss, triggers our pain, she may have no intention of healing us. But that doesn't matter. We can accept our gifts in whatever form they appear.

This is an excerpt from David's book, How To Worship The Goddess & Keep Your Balls.
Click here to buy it.

An Apology to Men

PART 1

by Freya Watson

Saying sorry is never easy. But it's especially difficult when it means revealing something that has become such a normal part of life, something we do almost naturally. If I tell you the truth, will you still love me? If I tell the truth, will it encourage others to step forward and say, 'yeah, me too - I'd prefer to live in a more authentic world'? Or will I be marginalized and denied? Who knows. All I know is that there are times when we end up being the one who steps forward to speak out.

So here goes the first apology of several, although my voice is far from steady and my legs aren't exactly solid as I step forward.

I'm sorry… that we women use our sexuality as a weapon.

What?

Yes, you heard me right. Please be patient with me while I try to explain.

I'm sorry that we have taken something which is inherently so powerful, so beautiful, so magical and continue to use it as a tool for manipulation and control.

I could try to defend our actions by laying the blame at someone else's door. That would certainly make me feel less vulnerable. I could say we use our feminine sexuality in the way we do as a result of centuries of unenlightened male oppression and objectification. Or I could explain it away by saying there's no problem with how we express our sexuality - it's you guys who aren't mature enough to handle female empowerment.

But what's the point in apologizing if it's not going to go all the way, if I'm going to add a whole load of caveats to it? And, anyway, although both of these are also true, and have contributed to the creation of a society where we all treat female sexuality as a commodity, it doesn't mean we can't choose to treat it differently. When we either conform to or react against the way society portrays sexuality, we are still caught within the dominant paradigm and allowing it to dictate how we act. It takes a lot of strength and independence to step completely away and to act from a place of integrity, from a place of allowing our actions to be directed from the heart of who we are.

Am I brave enough to live that way, to put aside the bad habit of using my sexuality as a tool in my armament? I don't know. But I'm willing to try because I'm getting a little fed up of the energy we are wasting on the silly games we play and of the pressure to join in. It also has a habit of backfiring - creating a dynamic where we all end up wearing masks that conceal who we really are and deprive us of the opportunity for real intimacy.

I'm still not being very clear, though, am I? I'm still beating around the bush in the hope that you'll guess what I mean without me having to spell it out in a way that makes me cringe. But I guess cringing just goes with the territory, so let me be blunt.

We use our sexuality to lure you in. We act as if you can be easily led by the balls into giving us what we want by shoving cleavage or thigh - or more - in your face. I mean, sure, when my self-esteem needs a quick boost, it's tempting to post a revealing selfie or wag my tail in your face to get you to pay attention. But it doesn't

feel quite so good when my sisters do likewise and my man is the audience. Nor does it feel so good when my sisters flaunt their sexuality to compete with me in business and I feel under pressure to do the same. It mixes up the message, too, for men, as if we're saying on the one hand 'how dare you treat me as nothing but a sex object' and on the other hand, 'hey, I know you can't resist my boobs'. So for all the times I've displayed my body or acted provocatively with every intention of manipulating you into giving me what I want, emotionally and physically, I'm truly sorry.

And the manipulation doesn't stop once you've been lured in. We also use our sexuality for emotional blackmail - to get you, and keep you, where we want you. Like when I'm angry at you and hold back sexually when you want to get close. I feel hurt by something you've said or done and I hurt you back by hitting below the belt. You want sex? Well, you'd better be a good boy and do what mommy wants or you won't get any treats. Isn't that what my behavior amounts to? Or when you are unsure of how you feel and I dial up the sex appeal, hoping to tempt you into giving me something you may not really want to give. It can be attention, maybe, or more commitment. Ouch! What a thing to do to someone I love. I'm so sorry. Maybe I need to grow up a little too and find more mature ways of handling my fears and fluctuating self-esteem.

If I had an heirloom - an antique string of pearls, maybe, or gold chain - would I use it to tie the dog up with? Absolutely no way! So what does it say of me when I use my sexuality to manipulate and control both the men and situations in my life? Where is my respect? And where is my confidence in being able to navigate life without treating it like a battleground where sexuality is the weapon of choice?

I'm hoping that by apologizing and by showing you some of the behavior that I am less proud of, it may set both of us free from the patterns that have been playing out between us. Maybe, in the future, if I slip back into them again from a place of fear or hurt, you might call me on it and not automatically react. Do you think you could do that?

And I have some promises I want to make both of us, to show I mean it.

I promise from now on to be more direct, honest and open in asking for what I want. After all, we live in an age of equality and the time when women needed to use sexuality as a way of getting what they wanted in an unequal society is now over.

I promise to work on my self-esteem if I'm feeling low rather than flaunting my body in your face to extract attention that will give me a temporary boost.

I promise to let you know directly if I feel angry or hurt.

I promise to respect your integrity as a fellow human being.

I promise to respect your freedom to say no.

And, most of all, I promise to respect my sexuality as a powerful gift to be cherished.

Thank you for hearing me out, my dear friend and lover. X

THE TRUTH FOR WOMEN

RAW

AN APOLOGY TO WOMEN

PART 1

BY ANONYMOUS



Dear a former date,

I am so sorry. I am so sorry that my genitals ruled me. I am sorry that I was overcome by peer pressure, thinking that it was an accolade to get another notch on the bedpost. What a sorry state of affairs us boys are in when we have conversations like that. I am sorry for not being connected to my heart as well as your heart. I am so sorry.

I should have known better that to sleep with you that night. Your body said yes but that doesn't mean your heart and soul wanted it. Why couldn't I have read the important parts of your body rather than focusing on being between your legs? I should have asked you and gotten a clear yes from every part of your being. Men should always ask if you are ready to be entered, and penetrate you with deep love.

I am sorry the way the unconscious male-dominated society is set up for us only to validate ourselves through chasing you as a piece of boobs and ass. I am sorry that I looked at you that way. Forgive me. Forgive us.

I am sorry that this ever happened.

I am sorry for not loving you before fucking you.

I am sorry for talking about you to my friends as if you were only a body.

I am sorry for not holding your heart before going to your pants.

I am sorry for only thinking of you as something to have sex with.

I am sorry for being so obsessed to get inside you and conquer you.

I wish it could have been a night where we both consciously said yes. I wish it could have been a night where we could have felt each other's souls and then our animalistic passion for each other. I wish it were a night we could remember fondly, and not one wishing that it never happened.

From this day forward…

I promise to honor your body before entering you.

I promise to see your heart and soul.

I promise to speak about what kind of physical interaction I want to share with you before we start it.

I promise to never talk to my friends about you like you are a piece of meat and promise to honor my integrity and not the illusory peer pressure around me.

I promise to just hold you if that is what you need, and breathe out the energy in my whirring genitals.

I promise to see and honor your inner Goddess.

I promise to care about how you feel on every level before we make love.

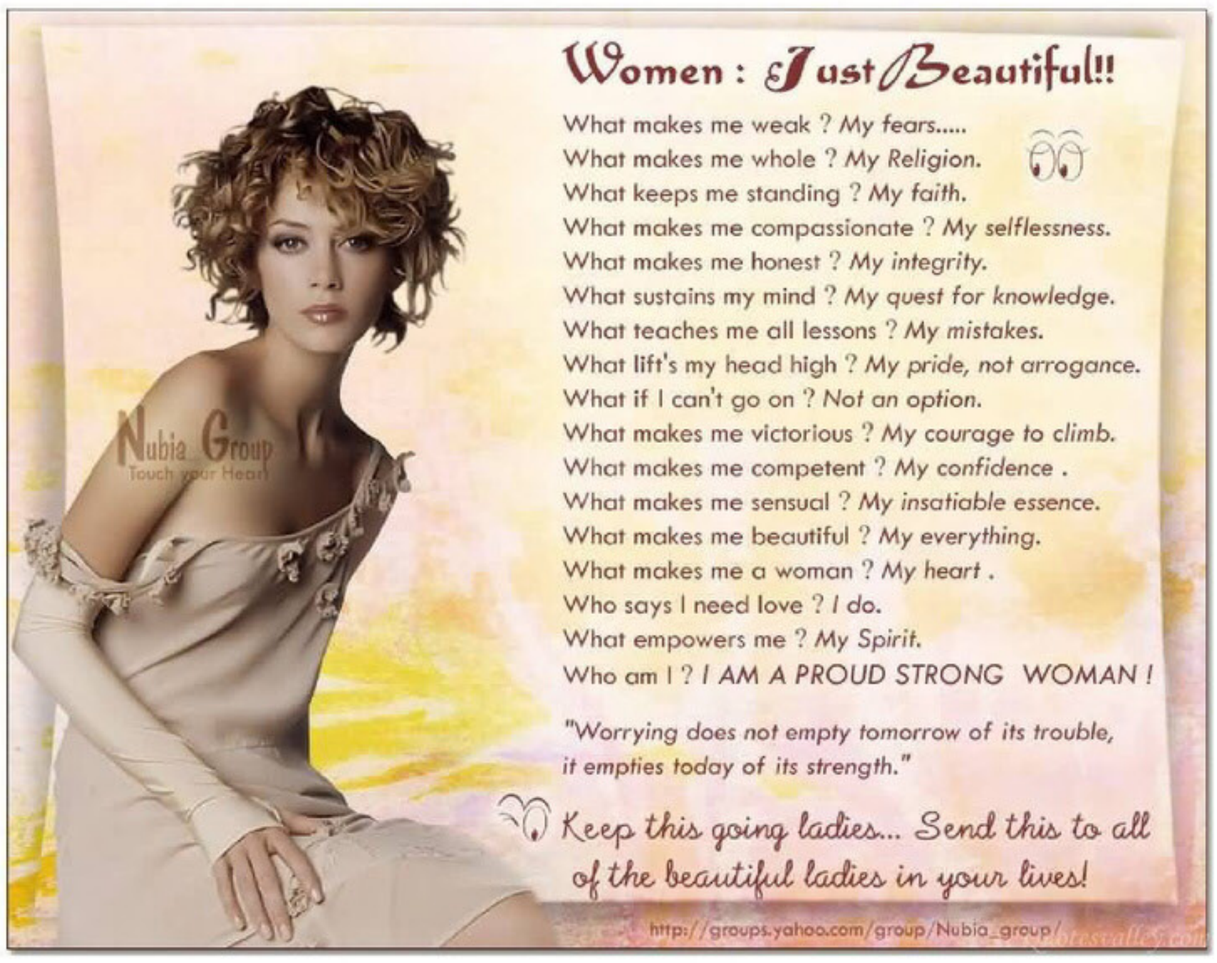
Forgive me.

emoji / photocase.com

THE WOUNDED FEMININE

by Shondra Rose of Light

This photo/poster that has been openly shared on social media starts our discussion.



The reader should understand that each of us have within us feminine and masculine elements and qualities, aspects and selves. The gender of our physical body dictates a lot of how we relate to those, but ultimately, we all have both, and are all essentially unhealed, having descended from the heights, where all was one, to the densities, where all seems separated into genders. In our experience of the lower dimensions, where the separation of masculine and feminine is most pronounced, we have taken on the clothing, or vestments of our “wounded selves” in both the masculine and the feminine expressions. We can, however “wake up and remember” our divine selves, and reunite our Divine Masculine and our Divine Feminine, but it requires a process. The first step of which is to recognized the energies and trappings of our wounded masculine and our wounded feminine for what they are: illusions that are not the truth of our true selves, but inside of which we have functioned for millennia or more. Once we have made it conscious, it is easier to lay aside that which is NOT us, and call in our truer selves, who are Divine and lack nothing. That being said, lets have a look.

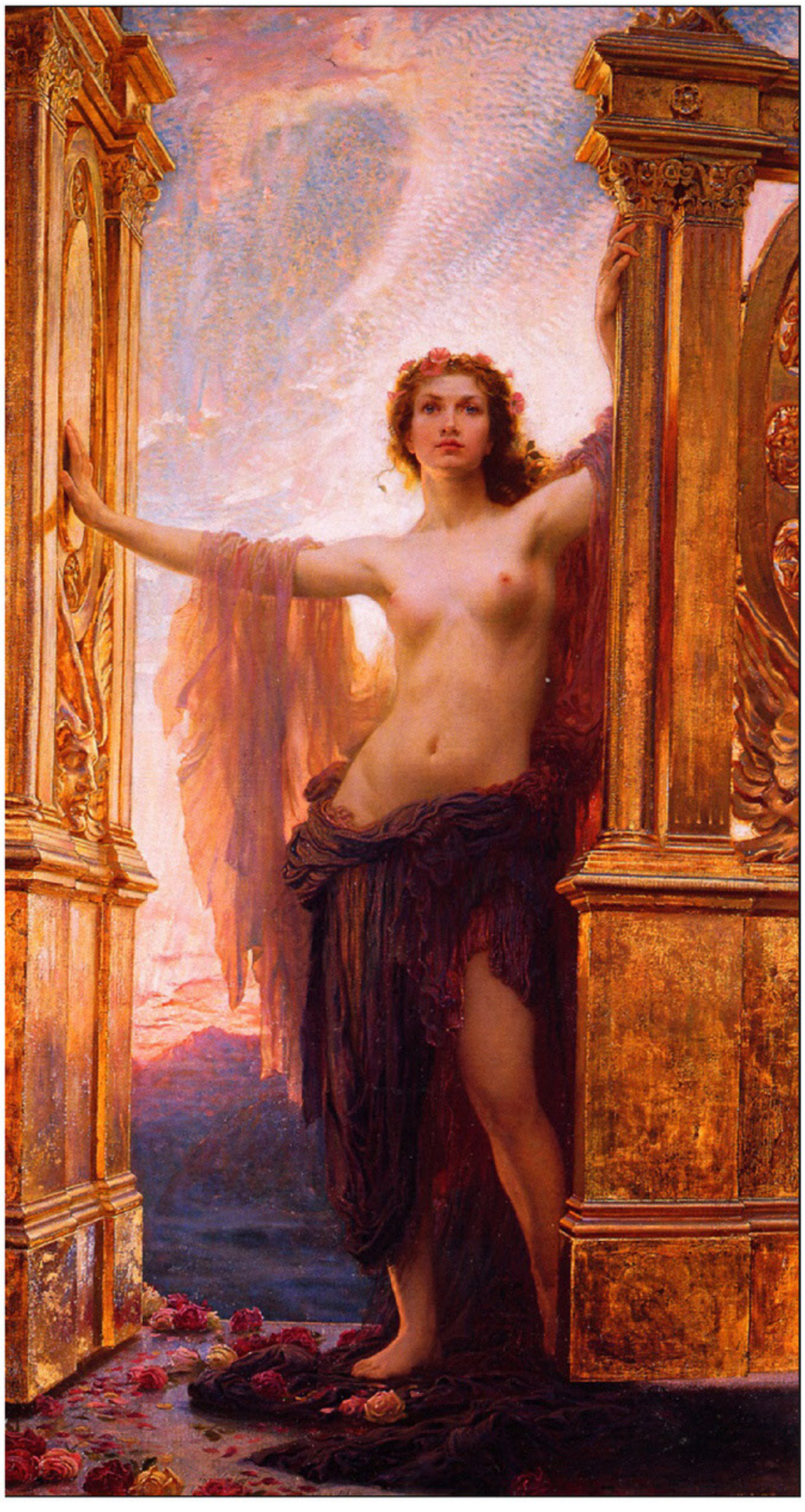
I have a LOT to say about this piece. Where shall I start? I see in this picture a deeply wounded feminine, seductively dressed, who is made-up to the hilt to make up for the inner beauty she cannot yet radiate because she has not dealt with the inner sense of unworthiness. Even her posture is not upright, but gently stooped to protect her wounded heart, hiding her left arm and hand altogether (in which she may hold a weapon of self-defense). She is looking to “catch the man of her dreams” but this will be hard, since she does not believe in her heart that she deserves him, and more importantly, she has NOT ENGAGED HER DIVINE MASCULINE WITHIN to make her whole. Therefore, the ONLY masculine she can attract, and her inner self reflects it, is a “wounded masculine”, who will abuse her and throw her away, as that is what the fallen masculine programming makes him do, and she has NOT dealt with her inner wounded masculine yet, or she would not be working so hard to “catch a man”. This wounded feminine betrays her fear in her eyes, that someone will see how pitifully unworthy of love she really is and she won’t get the love she craves.

A woman who is strong and self confident within DOES NOT DRESS LIKE THIS, or hide anything. Compare this woman in the photo with the Creatrix painting by Herbert James Draper below: Even though she is even more exposed, you can feel her upright stature. She is self-possessed. You can feel her Divine

Masculine within, holding her core. “She is a woman standing in her own power, beholden to no man”. See how OPEN her whole energy is, her heart, her arms, embracing her universe with confidence. By comparison, her counterpart in this poster looks stiff, contrived and posed, rather than free and graceful as the Creatrix is. The Creatrix needs not to “make up” for anything. She EXUDES strength, beauty, poise, balance, in command of her world.

The wounded feminine looks like she is “begging” to be told she is beautiful, and that if anyone makes a careless comment to her, she is likely to cry and smear her makeup. She is staring you down, as if to try to manipulate you with her gaze. The Creatrix is gazing nonchalantly out onto her creation, in quiet, yet powerful BEING, not attempting to impress anyone. She has both her hands visible. The wounded feminine is hiding her left arm and hand completely… which could be a combination of shame and/or she is hiding what she is doing with her feminine energy (making a love spell perhaps?), fostering an undercurrent of distrust around her, as she might stab you in the back if you are not careful around her. The feminine who has not engaged her Divine Masculine CANNOT be trusted, because she has not engaged her own inner integrity, and therefore she is not capable of presenting to others what she has not yet engaged within herself.

Oh yes... the HAIR! The “tasseled, just-been-in-bed” look, another part of the seductive, manipulative energetic. The wounded, “tricky” feminine will often be seen with “pointy hair”, pointy shoes, and other accessories. The empowered goddess will have graceful curls that look naturally lustrous, shining with her “pregnant possibilities”.



Herbert James Draper, The Gates of Dawn. Date 1900.

The Creatrix, A Radiant Vision of the Divine Feminine, standing in the place powerfully held for her by the fully-present Divine Masculine portrayed here by the GOLD gate. Her Divine Masculine is holding strong, open clear space for her pristine creations.

Enough on the pictures. Now the words: I will just address some of these.

What makes me whole: My religion

She is looking outside for a “god”, masculine, a source of power that is NOT INSIDE, but is accessed in some form or practice or structure. This denies her wholeness within altogether. This woman will remain “dis-empowered and unworthy of love” as long as she is looking elsewhere for validation, and NOT ENGAGING her own Divine Masculine within to love and validate her.

What keeps me standing: My Faith.

In WHAT? What about KNOWING Self? This is where the Divine Masculine is engaged, where the inner Truth is accessed. If we know our Truth first hand, within, there is no need for “faith” in something unseen, and no doubt that can cause weak knees to buckle.

What makes me a woman: My heart

Anatomy 101: What body part do men NOT have? (hint: even male bodies have hearts) The part of a woman that makes her a WOMB-MAN is a WOMB! Not a heart. This piece completely ignores the creative center of the womb-man, and focuses instead the part that is the most wounded, the heart, which is missing her Original Divine Innocence (and she will not get this back until she engages her Divine Masculine enough to wake up to the fact that it is missing and call it back).

Who Says I need Love? : I do.

Pure statement of LACK! It is only the wounded parts of us that have “needs” at all. If we are standing in the fullness of and embracing our Divine Masculine, who is embracing and engaging our Divine Feminine, the whole concept of need evaporates in the profuse abundance produced by their Sacred Union. The wounded feminine, who is trying to prop herself up alone, or through her “sisters”, will never know this abundance, because her inner Divine Masculine is the only one who can call forth her worthiness, which she had cast aside so long ago. Affirming her lack will only produce more lack, and produce more experience of “lack of love”. The wounded feminine CANNOT help the wounded feminine find her wholeness, or even her power, except the “tricky, manipulative” kind, which denies the masculine and vows to control and block him. This effectively cuts her off from the only real access to the very thing she desires.

As for Love, if the essence of our Being IS Love, we can only “need” love if we are in fact denying our Essence.

Who says I need love? I AM Love, therefore I have no need.

Oh, yes… the term “Ladies”

This is a term that energizes the whole concept and energetics of the Patriarchy, in which the wounded masculine has reined and dominated. Women have been considered his possession and resource, for the most part not allowed to own land, money, or wield her own power apart from her submissiveness to him. Women still do not have anywhere near the same earning power as men, so do not pretend the Patriarchy is over. Even women who have gained power under the Patriarchy have had to operate under “his rules”, and operating from her own wounded masculine, just to be successful. And a “Lady” was required to “act like a lady” or she stood to lose all she had access to through her

"Lord". No woman who is truly engaging her Divine Masculine and her Divine Feminine in wholeness would want to trade that in for the restrictions of ever being "a Lady" again!

I have not stated all these things to make anyone wrong, but to illustrate how we have all been operating inside of "woundedness", both masculine and feminine forms of it, in EACH of us. And THERE IS NO HEALING of the WOUND! Our Divine Forms were NEVER wounded, we only took on the illusion of "woundedness" as we "fell from grace" into the densities of the lower dimensions to experience the ILLUSION of SEPARATION. We can recognize this, like layers of clothing we put on to play a game, but with the help of our Awakened Divine Masculine, and owning it, valuing the experience, and laying it aside, while we ENGAGE MORE OF OUR DIVINE FEMININE to embody with us, thus displacing the lesser forms.

True Empowerment comes from rediscovering and engaging our wholeness, not from trying to "fix" our wounded selves. Everyone has the ability within (when one is ready) to begin to make the shift from wounded to "One Within". Here are some things you can do, if you feel ready to start.

Action Steps:

- Start NOTICING wounded behaviors and characteristics in yourself and in others, just observing them with neutrality. Make a list of them if you feel that will help. See them from a neutral place, without judgment.

- Call forward your higher conscious self (Divine Masculine) to just hold all those elements and the people (self and others) exhibiting them in Unconditional Love.

- Imagine these wounded qualities and behaviors melting away, or being shed like layers of clothing, to reveal inside the radiant being of Light and Love that came down here to play "dress-up" with all these sets of clothes. Give yourself permission to see and behold the Divine Truth of the being behind the clothes, whether it is you or someone else (and remember that might be part of the illusion too, if there really is "only one of us here".)

Deep Blessings,

Shondra Rose of Light
Facilitator and Trainer for Embodying the Sacred Union Within.
www.roseoflight.com

SEX

RAW

The Personal Erotic Myth

Part 3



by Galen Fous

How Would You Respond to Your Partner's Request for Dominating, Rough Kinky Sex?

Our inner sexual yearnings and our intimate relations with our partners are way more complicated than the simplistic, prudish, sexual morality we have grown up with. Here is just one of these complexities that I encounter when working with men, women and couples seeking to embrace their most taboo desires, in a conscious healthy way.

Women's sexuality and its overt, liberated expression are on the rise. They are coming out of the shadows and into the mainstream. For many women, this means learning about self-love, intimate touch, sacred sexuality, neo-tantra, sex toys, g-spots and other meaningful sensual expressions. For others, it has a more kinky, edgy expression. This interest in Kink, Dominance and submission and Fetish by tenths of millions of women worldwide was recently awakened and revealed by the 50 Shades phenomenon.

Paradoxically, the cultural conversation about men's sexuality is seeped in notions of rape-culture, creepiness, and misogyny from the left and immorality, sin and the work of the devil on the right.

Over the last 50 years, a great number of men have attempted or were raised to be the nice, sweet, considerate guy. What Robert Bly coined as the "soft male" is a predominate representation of the masculine in these current times. These are men who lost their edge, their voice, their ability to push back and hold their ground in their relations with women, without manifesting the tyrant or the weakling. There is a significant population of men whose sexual engagement style is toned way down, consequently, and shamed into conformity by conservative, religious morality, an emasculating environment and our generally sex-negative culture.

So what should a guy do when their partner grows weary of tepid nice guy sex and demands that he be a brutish predator in the bedroom? If you have not already embraced your conscious good man and your conscious bad boy, here is a story of a man who did, in his relationship with his fiancé.

In parts 1 and 2 of this series, I described the journey of a client couple. They were divided by an unbridgeable erotic mismatch. The woman was at a point where she felt she might need to leave the relationship. I met with the woman initially for several sessions, prior to meeting with her partner. She revealed that her life-long sexual yearnings centered on submitting to an aggressive dominant man… or men. During the course of her work with me, she began to come to terms with her own fears, shames and shadowy unconscious behaviors, which showed up around her fetish desires. These desires included fantasies of rough sex, dressing slutty and being gang-raped, or being owned and passed around by her Dominant man. These had been recurring themes in her frequent masturbatory excursions since her early teens.

Now in her mid forties she was determined to embrace this mostly hidden, secreted, abandoned part of her sexuality, in a healthy, conscious, mature way. This included learning about honestly discussing her desires with her partner, negotiating for what she wanted, reviewing safety issues, safewords, aftercare and other components of conscious engagement of her fetish desires.

Her newly enlivened and liberated passion began to wake up the sleeping dominant assertive sexual masculine within her fiancé. But part of him was very reluctant, and not sure he could allow himself to let go of his deeply ingrained nice guy embodiment. Up until this moment he had been the kind, sweet soft masculine presence he had been raised to be. He did not believe it was right for a man to be aggressive and dominant. This point had been drilled into him as a boy by his very domineering mother. While this generally made him a very sweet and easy-going partner in the day-to-day relationship, it also left his partner's fierce authentic erotic desires unfulfilled. This divide threatened the long-term union they both sought with each other.

I began work with him one-on-one to support him in bringing his latent but authentic sexual dominance to life, and learning to bring it to conscious, consensual expression.

Here is how he stated his want:

"I would like to meet with you to further C's journey and enjoyment of the BDSM scenes/ themes that so draw her. I am only mildly interested in being a top to her, and would like to explore this with you. These three issues seem to be what's holding me back:

1) Fear of rejection if I don't get it right, or if I don't develop a stronger dom-sense.

2) Dismay that we don't find time for regular sex, and wanting my basic sexual needs and our connection to be satisfied before we embark on a risky project.

3) It looks like a dauntingly large project that takes a lot of pre-planning and learning of techniques.



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Over the course of 3 sessions I supported L (how I will refer to him) in beginning to identify and untangle the unconscious restrictions and internal beliefs he held about his masculine power. He began to understand how his nice-guyness had a shadow side, as well as a noble side. His exploration of the shadow side revealed his fear of stating a strong opinion, a fear of displeasing a woman, of raising a woman's anger. This part of him felt powerless, weak, timid and shy. He was unable to state or hold his own boundaries. He was continually yielding and bending. At times, though, the accumulated resentment from his abdications would cause a brief explosion of anger. He began to understand how he could bring both his sweet, tender side, as well as his assertive masculine side into balance, instead of abandoning or holding his own voice back. The next step was to bring this sense of power into the erotic dance his partner so longed to explore with him.

Another area of work that was clear, and is often the case, was his lack of body awareness, or presence. His shyness and timidity were mirrored in his body language and movements. I helped him through some movement practices to bring a more fluid, graceful flow into his gestures. This helped smooth out the clunky, unsyncopated movements his body had been stuck with for so long. He learned about staying in his breath and intention to support being present.

I put a leather flogger in his hand. I had him kneel and place a big pillow before him. I asked him to hit the pillow with the flogger. His aim, his control, his power-stroke were all offbeat, as would be expected after decades of the restraint he had placed on his body and fierceness. We worked on some mechanics and, with some practice, his body eased into a more coordinated and potent swing of the flogger.

In regards to the fierceness, the emotional content, I suggested he recalled his anger at some point along the way with C, where he abdicated his power, his own rights. I could see the spark in his eye and then in his body as he made the connection between his right to his personal power, his right to his own want, and the authentic expression of it. This exercise supported an important connection at the physical level, as it brought fierceness back into his body, and authentic emotional expression into his soul, that had never been allowed. He said he never felt more exhilarated. To be clear, this exercise was about accessing and embodying fierceness not an old story of anger.

I had already worked with his partner and knew she had shared the practices of negotiation, safe-words and after care required to safely journey into these more primitive instinctual levels of desire.

I also helped him understand how these were two different aspects of their relationship, the day-to-day loving side of tenderness, respect and care, and the erotic side that was calling for a fierce, untamed force and dominance of his partner in a consensual negotiated framework.

After the first session, I heard back from him via email later in the week.

"I want to share what a great experience I had at our session, how powerful I felt being me, more assertive, more alive, less shy about offending by sharing my opinions. Then a few days later, I had a joyous Dom experience controlling and forcefully spanking my partner during lovemaking, much to her pleasure. Such different roles, and so deliciously fulfilling to be embracing them. The unfolding continues! I am especially interested in learning the talk that C craves, the daddy/teacher/authority figure talk that you demonstrated so well."

In our next session, I offered more about ritual as a practical tool for consciously entering these deeper aspects of Eros. I explained how creating a meaningful ritual container could support his new intention in engaging his partner.

This container becomes his personal domain to rule in, as he desires. It is his personal realm that by design supports him by creating the ambiance that best suits him. This ambiance includes lighting, sounds/music, aromas, textures, and artifacts, as well as how he wanted C to dress, enter the room etc. All of these levels of ambiance enliven the physical senses and thus support presence and embodiment.

I worked further with the idea of embodiment of this dominant, authoritative, daddy persona that was emerging. He did not need to script out dialogue for that persona as much as to allow this innate part of him that was becoming more evident to fully embody in his and his partner's ritual engagements. That part of him already knew what to say and what he wanted. All the parts of him that resisted, judged, or felt shame about this aspect of his erotic expression just needed to get out of the way. His dominant persona, when fully present, knew exactly what it wanted to say, what tone of voice, what physical intensity it might be said with.

He next reported back:

"I had a blast with C last week applying what I learned about creating my own ritual container… having her start the ritual dressed in my preferred sexy attire and lighting the fire on her knees, being my footstool, taking off my shoes and socks. I started to feel more comfortable in telling her what to do, what "I" wanted her to do. Seeing her respond so devotedly, being a "good girl" for "Daddy" was amazing, exhilarating. Yeah, it was so good!"

About 6 months after I last saw them, I received an invitation to their wedding. It was a beautiful day in July. The ceremony was a lovely statement of devotion and care for each other and their intention for their life together from that day forth. When I went through the receiving line to congratulate them, I received a big smile and warm hug from C. Then I gave L a hug and he leaned over and said. "Galen, I wouldn't have made it here if it was not for you, I am a changed man!"

"Thank you, but you did the work, you both did. I just nudged you a bit to find your own path", I replied.

There is a path for each of us to be conscious, empowered, respectful compassionate men and women. Taking this path allows us each to fully embrace the full range of our sexuality from sacred to profane. We just need to do the work to open the gates blocking the path. X



BECOME THE BEST LOVER SHE EVER HAD

by Ronja Sebastian

Men – this is written especially for you. (Women – feel free to read it, comment, and of course share it with your boyfriend/male friends…)

Imagine for a moment…You're on your way over to meet this woman you've been dating for a couple of weeks…When you ring the bell, she calls "come inside, it's open…" "Sounds good", you think, and enter her apartment. You walk into the kitchen where she's standing with her back to you, making a salad by the kitchen counter. She looks great from behind but you want to be nice and say hello. So you walk over there and turn her around to give her a kiss…

As she turns to face you she already has a sly smile…

And with a half open mouth she escapes your kiss, sinks down on her knees, unzips your pants – looks up at you for a moment with eyes filled with both hunger and devotion… and then slides you in between her soft, wet lips and begins blowing you. You lean back against the counter, close your eyes and think "Oh my God, this is HEAVEN"…

Can you see it? Can you feel it? Not a bad way to be welcomed, right? Most men don't mind when a woman goes straight for the main course. Of course, men can also enjoy really taking it slow, but very few would say 'no' to this kind of surprise! In fact, most men probably DREAM of having a woman who is so open and ready in a second or less. Wouldn't you?

So what if we reverse the scenario?

She comes home from work and as soon as she walks into the kitchen you get down and begin licking her passionately. Should be quite a turn on for her as well, right? Hell. No. This is a place where the Golden Rule doesn't apply. You should not do to her what you would love her to do to you.

It's the complete opposite.
While men can get turned on by having their genitals touched and stimulated, the exact opposite is true for women.

The key to deeply arousing a woman (in a way that she doesn't have to fake anything) is to touch everything except for her genitals.

So what does that mean? It means that you go on a journey across the landscape of her body – and purposefully don't arrive. Explore her neck, collarbones, breasts, belly, the inside of her arm, inside of her thighs, butt, lips, hair – every woman is different so pay attention to the way she responds… Play with super light and very firm touch – the more you go to both extremes, the more powerful it is.

Sometimes even stay still and just hold her so she can feel that you're really there with her. And don't forget her breasts and nipples. (*Side note: most guys use a way too firm touch here. Less is more. Light, sensitive "almost-not-touching"-touch is the most powerful. And simply holding our breasts without squeezing them is a beautiful way to open both our heart and our pussy.)

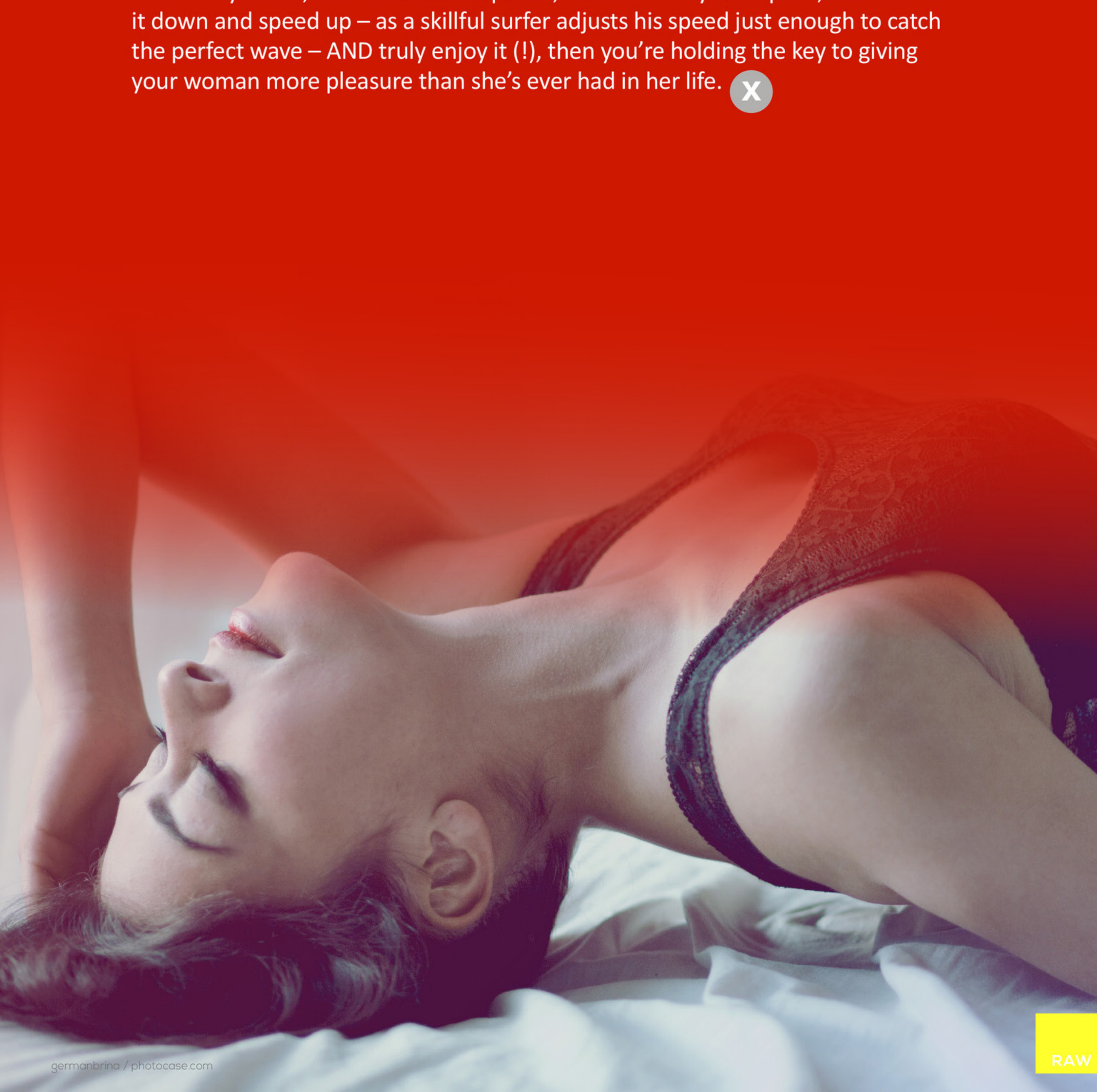
Then continue touching her… You can even slide your fingers across where her inner thighs meet her outer vaginal lips, or even the opening to her yoni – just briefly enough to give her a super quick teaser – and then continue down her legs or up her belly. Keep. Her. Longing. For. More.

Fact about women:
Women LOVE being felt and seen, so it's important that you stay completely present in every touch, in every moment.

Very important: If you're doing it only because you think "I hope this will work, and soon I'll get to the good part" (sliding into her) – then she'll feel that and she won't open. Enjoy her, be amazed, experience the texture of her soft skin, feel her breath/breathe with her and see her beauty.

Only when she’s deeply warmed up, open, wet, ready and practically begging for you to slide inside her or give her oral pleasure – that’s the moment to give it to her – and not a second earlier.

Believe me, so few men know how to play this right, and if you can stay present with every touch, listen into her response, sense the way she opens, dare to slow it down and speed up – as a skillful surfer adjusts his speed just enough to catch the perfect wave – AND truly enjoy it (!), then you’re holding the key to giving your woman more pleasure than she’s ever had in her life. X



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